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WILLARD HUNTINGTON WRIGHT
EDITOR



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THE SMART SET

WILLARD HUNTINGTON WRIGHT, *Editor*

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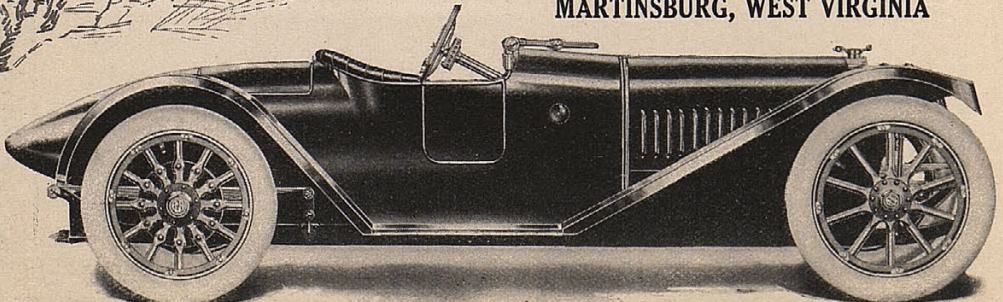
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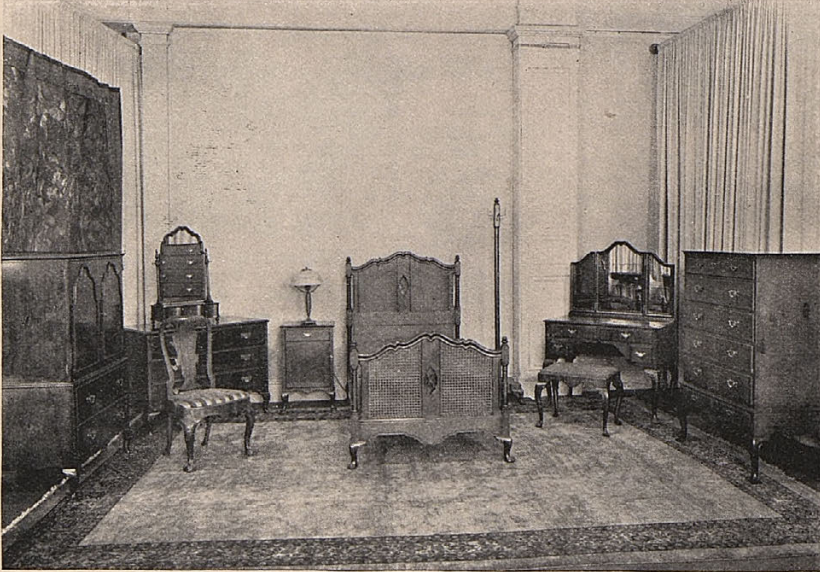
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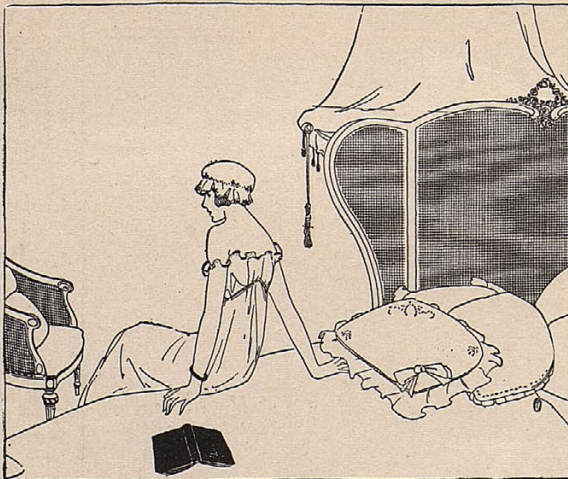
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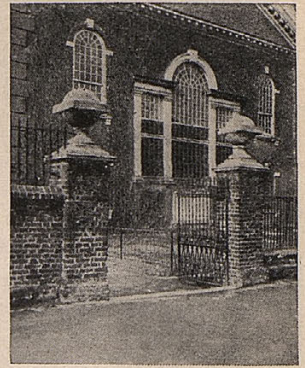
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THE SMART SET

The Magazine For Minds That Are Not Primitive

NEW YORK

By Edwin Davies Schoonmaker

SEA-RIMMED and teeming with millions poured out on thy granite shore
Surge upon surge, many-nationed, O city far-famed for the roar
Of thy cavernous iron streets and thy towers half hung in the sun,
Rising in layer on layer, twelve cities piled upon one,
All feeding and sleeping and breeding, enormous, half palace, half den,
With ever a tide washing through thee whose clamoring waters are men,
O where is the hand of thy builder? What god, canst thou tell,
Hath his hand on the clay of thy face? Or what demon from Hell?

I have viewed with the eye of the stranger and the pride of the New World man
The mountainous leap of thy glory, the miles of thy endless span,
And my heart has gone up with thy towers and my love has fallen as dew
On thy night-blooming lamps in rows on thy beautiful Avenue.
I have stood with a seaman's glass on the roofs of thy high hotels;
I have rolled through the sheer ravines where the cliff dweller dwells;
I have peered from the place of the Tomb far up where the hills break free
And the length of the lordly River comes down as a bride to the sea;
I have fled with a roar through the rock where the myriad lights flash by;
I have heard the song of the soaring steel come down from the sky;
I have watched as a lover thy waters all mottled with cloud and with sun
Where the ocean comes in to caress thee, O Beautiful One;
And the days and the years of my life are a gift unto thee,
And I dwell in thy marvelous gates, O Goddess cast up by the sea!

I have surged with the morning throng down the gulf of the Great White Way
That gashes thy granite length from the towers of sleep to the Bay

THE SMART SET

When the West rolls in with a rush and the North comes down with a roar
And the tramp of the Island men is loud on thy island shore.
Shoulder to shoulder they come from the loins of a hundred lands,
The men with the New World brains and the men with the Old World hands,
And the vision is bright on the sky of the City to be
And the joy of the morning is there and the thrill of the sea.
As a surf is the sound of thy labor, O City; as wine
Is the hum of thy human streets filled with faces divine
When from building on populous building thy power unfurled
Leaps down to the sea and off through the air to the ends of the world.
I have loafed round the banging wharves where the foreign freighters lie;
I have watched the bridge-weaving shuttles pass over the sky;
I have felt the quick leap of thy drills where the builders of Rome
Swing the rock from the hole in the ground for the walls of thy home;
I have heard far down through the canyons the clamor and yell
When the brokers are out with their signs and the Curb is a hell;
I have sounded thy chattering markets; I have watched the noon hour
Come over thy toiling miles with a slack of thy terrible power
When story on story lets out on the pavement below
And thy streets are a-swarm with the Jew and the parks overflow.

Far-famed is the rustling hour when the shoppers flow in.
For miles thy walks are abloom and the monstrous fairs begin,
And the aisles of the merchants are crowded, and dark-faced boys
Are out on the corners with flowers, and the fakirs are there with their toys.
I have paused with the passing throng where the hoyden sea wind whirls
And whisks round the tall gray towers the skirts of the laughing girls;
I have watched round the wonder of windows the beauty and grace;
I have breasted the streaming throngs and have come to the quiet place
Of the Fountain, and weary with tramping have lounged on the benches there
With the homeless man of the streets, the man with the unkempt hair;
Have given him soul for soul as we watched far up in the skies
The just-seen worker wave and the slab of marble rise
To its place on the fortieth story. Still lit by the sun
Is the face of the golden clock when the toil of the day is done.
Then the long gray miles are a-murmur and the builders come down from the
sky,
And Speed throws her myriad shuttles and the ambulance hurries by,
And the foam of the evening papers is white on the living sea,
And the deep defiles are black with men as far as the eye can see,
And loaded trains rush north and west from thy mighty central heart,
And the rivers foam and the bridges sag till their strong steel cables start,

And the Rock drinks in its thousands from the moving flood in the street
As the strong male tide goes out with the roar of a million feet.
I know when the night comes down that a beautiful Siren awakes.
I have seen the flash of her eyes and the light that her shadow makes
On the rain-wet Avenue when the flutes of pleasure are heard
And she dances her way to the wine cup and sings like a bird.
Hand in hand go the sons of Youth and the daughters of Beauty divine,
And the children of Hunger are there who have trodden the grapes of their wine,
And the thousands pour and pour through the huge illumined Fair,
And the booths of a hundred lands are bright and the Wonder-worker is there.
The red star is out on the roof and the horses are off on the wall,
And the girl and the dog are blown along and the flashing waters fall,
And the flush of thy far-flung revel goes up to the ribbons of sky,
And forgotten Orion sinks down and the Pleiades die.
I have trailed down the peasant river; I have tramped where the iron "L's"
Go thundering down through the haunts of care; I have slumped through the
hidden hells;

I have jostled the mingling Bowery where the stream of the races rolls;
I know the town where the yellow man goes by on his velvet soles;
I have threaded the still, dark canyons where the clustered towers rise;
Not a foot is heard of the thousands; they are ghosts on the midnight skies;
I have seen o'er the glamour of waters thy piles upon shadowy piles
Standing out on the canvas of night and twinkling for miles upon miles.
As a grail is the gleam of thy towers and the glow of the Great White Way,
And a thousand ships have sailed and sailed to the lure of the lights on the Bay,
And the spell of thy song, O Enchantress, is sweet on the southern air,
And the shepherd far out on the plains feels the sting of thy hair.
Thou art young with the youth of them, strong with the strength of them, filled
with the beauty of girls;

Thy throat where the River gleams is beaded with lamps as with pearls;
And the languor of night is around thee and the waters rise and fall,
And over invisible bridges slow fireworms crawl,
And the Ferries that glide o'er the bay, o'er the rivers that lave
The feet of thy emerald towers, are lighted swans on the wave,
As Merlin had walked o'er thy waters, or Prospero's eye
Were watching alternate old cities line out on the sky.
One moment Jerusalem gleams and thy towers are holy and white,
And lo, at the turn of a glass, old Babylon etched on the night
With high summer gardens abloom and the wealth of the world in her hair;
Then Carnival laughs in thy streets and Cairo is there
Barbaric all over with brooches and fountains of fire
Till the new day quenches the lamps and flares over Tyre.

BEGINNING on the page facing this, we are offering to the readers of *THE SMART SET* what we consider one of the most remarkable novelettes which has ever come into this office. Mr. Howard's "Pages from the Book of Broadway" have created more intelligent discussion and have made a stronger impression on discriminating readers than any material this magazine has ever published.

In the present novel—which is another "Page from the Book of Broadway"—Mr. Howard has told a story which, in many ways, is the greatest of all epics which have been written about that fascinating thoroughfare. It gives you a picture of Broadway ten years ago and brings you down to the Broadway of today. In the course of the narrative many typical figures of the "fashionable underworld" are introduced. They are drawn from every stratum of the spectacular social life which constitutes the drama of the Nightless Lane.

"The Parasite" might justly be called the Human Comedy of Broadway. In no other similar work have so many phases of that strange and colorful world been authentically set forth.

Mr. Howard knows his *locale* and understands his people; he himself has been for many years professionally and personally connected with the life he describes. The characters of his story have been drawn from living people; and the incidents, though to the casual reader they may seem a little melodramatic, are none the less accurate and typical in every detail. No more romantic material is available today than that which is to be found in the great flux and reflux of human activities which constitute the daily life of Broadway.

There is a great lesson to be found in this story—not the conventional moral lesson of the triumph of virtue and the defeat of viciousness—but the greater lesson that life yields up only that which we ourselves give to it. It shows how the very evils which we ourselves may practise come back to us in the end and defeat us—how the very net which we may carefully weave in which to catch others is the snare in which we ourselves become entangled.

But there is no preaching in Mr. Howard's story. It is a truthful transcription of life. The characters in it are essentially human. They are neither all good nor all bad, but in them are potentialities for both good and evil. In the unfolding of the story one senses the whole sweep of Broadway life.

"The Parasite" has impressed us as a compelling and powerful piece of work, and while one may not admire the people in it, they are nevertheless interesting because they are real.

If you would know Broadway and its life—if you would understand that strange and fascinating segment of humanity whose unconventional existence is and has been the romance of the Great White Way, you cannot afford to skip a word of Mr. Howard's story.

THE PARASITE

A Page from the Book of Broadway

By George Bronson-Howard

IF not an "old wives'" tale, it is at least the oldest and the favorite in the Decameron of the Broadway choruses—pity there is no Boccaccio to write it down, that it must be one of a mere Heptameron. All the older girls know it, they who date from the days of hansom cabs at the stage door; those days when Wall Street and the House of Lords seemed principally for the purpose of bringing fortune and fame to languid, lineless ladies: days when girls with voices had been superseded by mere shapely beauties; who, in turn have been thrust forth for diligent dancers. Moreover, too much has been explained in print concerning them, and the Wall Street birds have become gun-shy, the Peerage peacocks no longer find matrimony a necessity. The golden days of '99 have passed: there are poor pickings for the "ponies" of the new regime.

So that, all along the Broadway coast, in the same long, low chorus dressing rooms where in those "good old days" celebrities were made overnight, "without half my looks, either"; youthful would-be buccaneers sigh for an adviser like "Con" Phillips to take them to those dizzy heights of stardom Violet Vandam adorns. Or, that Burton Jarvis who carried Letty Lee to fame. Or that Norman MacKinder who co-stars nowadays with Beth Bohen, or the person known generally as Arcy MacTea, friend of Toya Thiodolf. . . . Which is the longest story of all, for it touches upon the life histories of others besides: Carolus Lang, the money captain; his flighty and unworthy wife; J. Tubman Leeminster, polo player and member of many clubs. . . . And over it all hangs the ugly shadow of Milton Lazard, parasite.

THE Shadenham Hotel, a favorite nest for birds of prey, was one of that legion between Longacre and the Circle: a legion that, without the patronage of those whose habits, professions or avocations are inimical to law and morality, would close their doors in a week. So that, though preserving an outward semblance of propriety, the managements must train their susceptibilities and those of their staff not easily to be shocked. For in such places flying figures in thin kimonos are ever to be met with between noon and dawn in the halls; many in such scanty garb even taking the elevator from floor to floor, for there is not much likelihood of meeting within their walls anyone that mere breaches of propriety are likely to annoy. Bellboys have been trained to ignore the

sound of glass crashing and furniture overturning, of shrill imprecations and hoarsely growled oaths, even the sound of falls too muffled to be chairs or tables. Room clerks learn, after their first report, that the odor they took for cooking opium is only that of some Oriental tobacco; and that no hour is too late for a male visitor to be announced.

But, to the tyro entering the place (the novice, the stranger in New York), there are no outward signs that will prevent any young lady resident from persuading him of her high place in the society of her Southern home, or of her presence in New York for the study of music, painting or dramatic art. Below, the marble floor of the foyer is covered with Oriental rugs, the walls with tap-

estry or Gobelin burlap. High gilt-encrusted vases and paintings in heavy gilded frames abound. But everything is of that species of imitation "art" at which America excels. The clerk is dapper, the telephone, lift and bell-boys are neatly uniformed. Above, in the apartments—there are few single rooms in such places—there is more imitation "art": art nouveau wallpaper and art mission furniture—sufficient to delude the average half-educated American, reared in a home that has not yet rid itself of an aftermath of horsehair and walnut, that the apartment's resident has "artistic" tastes.

It was in such an apartment on a December afternoon that one girl of the Frivolity chorus came to call upon another; finding her, though the day was far advanced, not yet awake. Nor eke her lord and master, who slumbered on with great snores: while a patient little negro maid waited, and had waited since noon; fearing to move lest she disturb the sleepers. But the young lady visitor had no such scruples, calling loudly from the sitting room door. The lord and master started up—his eyes heavy with sleep, his mouth dry and unwholesome—protesting profanely in a voice that varied between a deep bass and a high squeak.

"It's time you were up—half past three," said the caller calmly. In return, she got a growl of semi-recognition from the pajama-clad one, who shook the sleeping figure beside him violently. "Better get out and stop that broad bawling the roof off," he snarled, reaching for the bag of near-alfalfa and the brown cigarette papers that were always his latest supper and his earliest breakfast.

The girl beside him sat up, her short, scanty blonde hair falling untidily about her face. Had her many admirers seen her then, barren of becoming apparel, the tip of her nose red from the cold—for the windows were open; the circles beneath her eyes unerased by make-up, the eyes themselves red-rimmed, her hair lifeless and burnt from overmuch "marcelling," and most of her *coiffure*—"puffs," made-up curls and "switches"

—on the dressing table, they would have failed to recognize the vision that gladdened the restaurants.

As for the parasite, stripped of his fashionable clothes, unshaven, his heavy jowls unrestricted and untamed by a collar, he looked less the part he had given himself to play, more that one nature had assigned him: but, when he rose, to potter over to the coffee percolator which the little negro girl had lit for the fourth time that day, he presented a picture more ludicrous than fearsome. He was like a giant Brownie—a huge head shaped like a coal scuttle, a heavy round stomach and the thinnest of legs and the smallest of feet, which, in one more than six feet tall, made him somewhat of a monstrosity. . . . And so the very youthful visitor giggled; which annoyed the parasite.

"Thirty years of getting my living by my wits, and then to be annoyed by a lot of field mice," he growled heavily. The bass of the growl was not natural; had been carefully assumed for many years to disguise the thin, squeaky staccato of his given voice. He snatched cup and saucer from the trembling Lilliputian negress, and turned on the percolator spigot.

"I came in to show you my new ring," said the caller jubilantly, slipping off one glove and displaying a large cabochon sapphire. "And he's going to give me another just like it, only a ruby. And say, Lily, you know that man Hardesty brought back stage to meet me? Why, that's Kane—Monty Kane. And he wants me to go to Europe on his yacht with him; and he says if I do he'll put a thousand in the Longacre Bank for me and get Mandelbaum to give me a good part when I come back, and he promised I could have anything I liked in the Paris shops and—"

"He didn't by any chance promise you the Flatiron Building for a chaser, did he?" sneered the parasite, then damned the Lilliputian for her vile brew of Java. But there was another knock on the door before the caller could give her indignant answer, and a third girl, a thin, anæmic creature, a gray *crêpe* kimono wrapped

closely about her, came in. She was followed by a fourth, healthy and red-blooded, smartly dressed for the street. She and the first caller, who had all the splendid color and exuberancy of youth, presented a striking contrast to the two girls in negligee.

"Having breakfast?" asked the healthy newcomer greedily. She sat herself down and, taking up a slice of bread just cut by the Lilliputian, spread it with jam and poured herself a cup of coffee. "Take some more," urged the parasite unpleasantly; "rub it on your chest or in your hair if you can't eat it. Go on. Don't you ever eat at your own expense?" To which the uninvited banqueter only winked, being too busy wolfing bread and jam to speak.

"I wish I could eat like Sarah," said the other newcomer in a peevish, discontented voice.

"You ought to wish you were dead and get it over with," advised the man. "I'll bet my good right arm and my best eye you got another wail about your tough luck to let out of you. Why come *here* with your troubles? Life looks tough enough to a man just out of the hay without a flock of pin-headed broads busting in on him; and when they ain't eating him out of house and home, they're *driving* him out with graveyard groans or some lying yarn or other. Why am *I* the goat?"

"If you're referring to me, Milton Lazard," said loftily the young girl of the new ring, "I'll have you know I'm not in the habit of telling lies. Don't judge others by yourself, you poor thing"—which at that time was Miss Toya Thiodolf's idea of repartee. "Look, girls"—and the history of the ring and the yachting offer was repeated. "You saw the earrings, didn't you, Lily?" The mistress of the apartment nodded, but the anæmic girl betrayed some doleful interest, and the perpetually hungry Miss Anna Drum, having eaten all she could lay hands on, greedily eyed the sparkling diamond and sapphire drops.

"You couldn't horn me in on the trip

some way, could you?" she asked, in intense anxiety. "You know I could help you a lot picking out dresses and jewelry. I used to work in the swellest department store in Chi—first I was cloak model, then selling junk—tortoise shell combs and baby pins and rhinestone buckles and such; and I got to know the real jewelry, being so friendly with the men clerks—"

"And getting them to buy you large hunks of nourishment, or I'm a mangy yellow pup," put in Lazard sourly. "There was chuck concealed somewhere in any friendship *you* ever had."

Miss Drum laughed in loud boisterousness as one who has been paid a compliment. "How about it, Toya, dear?" she continued eagerly. "When do you go?"

"Oh, Arcy wouldn't let me," said little Miss Toya, nestling her smooth olive skin against the soft fur of a huge pillow muff. Anna interpreted her sigh of philosophical resignation with a long intake of breath.

"Well—of all the mean men!" she said. "I suppose he's afraid of losing you if you ever get away from him and live like a lady."

"Lady?" jeered Lazard, his third cup of coffee having translated his earlier growl into a mock-genial satyr's smile. "Lady! She couldn't disguise herself as a lady with that Slavonic map of hers tipping the gaff, and those heavy hoofs of hers. And she better not invite you, Drum, unless she wants the rest of the passengers to starve on that tugboat trip of hers to Coney Island."

"Tugboat! Coney Island!!" cried Toya passionately. "Why, you poor thing, you!!!!"

"Oh, let her alone, Milton," urged the other half of the household.

"Thirty years making my living by my wits and then got to listen to a heavy-headed slab-footed chorus girl talk about passing up yacht trips to Europe and thousands in the bank; just because some thick-headed lover says so," said Lazard in moody wrath. "Why—"

"He says it's best in the end," ex-

plained Toya, with the air of one who agrees that she is defending the moonshine of a madman. "Says that once you give in to those rich fellows they don't have any more use for you."

"Oh, they pay for your entertaining conversation, do they—for the honor of being seen with a lot of pin-headed broads? Don't make me laugh!" returned the man. This time his bitter scorn held a more personal reason, for if this heresy took root in the mind of Lily Lamotte, he saw himself without the wherewithal with which to amuse himself in a certain White Light restaurant, where every night he played Sir Oracle (in motley) to the court of youths and others like himself who gathered there.

"He says, Arcy does," went on little Miss Toya, "that sort of thing's all right for girls who haven't got the brains to do anything else. But a girl who's smart doesn't have to . . ."

Lazard rejoiced that this went unheard by Lily, who had retired to turn the water for her bath. "Oh, and who's got brains?" he snarled savagely. "If yours ever grew the size of a flaxseed you'd blow up. If these Johns who're looking for something lighter than air 'ud only examine your head, they'd find it all right."

Delighted with having aroused his ire—for she hated him beyond endurance for many such contemptuous appraisals—Miss Toya Thiodolf continued in calm, judicial tones: "Arcy says a fellow hasn't got any right to have a girl unless he can better her, unless he can teach her to do something she can't do herself. And he says no man with any self-respect could love a girl that he shared with anybody. He says a real man wants his girl to be *his* girl, or else he don't care very much for her, and if a girl had any sense she'd see that and know that kind of fellow's only with a girl for what he can get . . ."

"Half an orange in the morning and half the room and half a sack of tobacco a week—I suppose I ought to give Lily trading stamps for paying so high for me," snarled Lazard, in mighty wrath. "And does this virtuous little guy of

yours believe you got that ring and those earrings and that taxi charge account just because that John's crazy about the sound of your voice?"

"Of course a thing like *you* wouldn't believe it," she responded loftily; "but that's because it's out of your *class*. Arcy says if Lily had a chance, if she didn't have *you*, she could afford to string fellows along, too. But it's just like anything when you need cash, he says—you don't get much of it. You're a fine-looking object for a girl to cheapen herself for! *She* ought to have *her* head examined."

Anna Drum, who had profited herself of this colloquy to wolf several slices of bread and jam and drink the remaining coffee, laughed boisterously again; and the thin, anæmic girl, who was in a like case with Lily, nodded in gloomy conviction. Lazard looked from one to another, his huge moon face purpling.

When he turned he saw that a stranger was in the room—a young man, lacking only an inch or so of six feet but hardly sizable alongside the huge bulk of Lazard: dressed foppishly according to Broadway standards: his clothes more usual to Fifth Avenue. For those were the days of huge padded shoulders; of trousers wide enough for two at the hips and too narrow for one at the ankles; of collars that closed tightly, showing only a wisp of necktie below; of goose-bill shoes; when the average American was a discernible freak, blocks away, in foreign countries. Lazard wore all these eccentricities and slashed foldover pockets, heavy coat cuffs with rows of stitching, and turn-ups to his trousers fully a foot wide, besides. The stranger, wearing none of them, seemed to Lazard badly dressed and insignificant.

His identity was immediately established by the trustfully adoring eyes of Miss Toya Thiodolf; and the two men measured each other as do two stranger dogs, neither coming to any flattering conclusion.

"This is Arcy, girls," said little Miss Toya, exhibiting him with even a greater pride than she had shown the ring. The sex instinct plays strange pranks, and these two, alien to one an-

other in class, race, breeding and education, were each desperately infatuated with the other. Lazard could see that she was making unfavorable comparisons between her cherished one and himself, which superinduced one of his usual sardonic speeches.

"So this is the famous adviser of indigent chorus molls—the guy who's got a mortgage on the brain market?"

Arcy did not shine in such exchanges of compliments, knew it, so only smiled deprecatingly. "Come, Kittens," he said to Toya; "you've got to try on some clothes this afternoon, you know, and you've got your French lesson and your music. . . . I'm trying to teach her it's best to cut out this Broadway habit of buying half a dozen ready made suits instead of having one made by a good tailor that'll look well until it wears out," he explained to the others, and, nodding, he took Toya off.

"Say, Lily," said Lazard, as that young woman reentered the room, "you missed it—you missed seeing a little guy with eyes wide apart just like a smelt, and broad just like a toothpick: that little Slav chorus girl's lover who's going to get you all rich—why, he couldn't take a handful of water outa the East River without getting an icicle down his back. It takes some stupid broad like that little Slav to fall for such a titmouse. The more I see of these *smart* fellows, the more I realize how lucky *you* are to grab a guy like me. I don't know what it is makes me stick—just habit, I guess."

And, having reestablished himself in her estimation by this monumental self-assurance and hint of insecurity as to her possession of him, he closed the curtain, and, scorning a bath, began to array himself in those garments that compelled the attention and won the admiration of a certain section of Broadway.

II

ARCY MACTEA, christened Robert Cameron MacThyndall, his nickname due to his habit of signing first correspondence then newspaper contributions

with his initials, R. C. MacT., was careful to repress the disgust that his experience in the Lamotte-Lazard establishment had wrought within him; having learned by the experience of others that there was no surer way to lose the average woman than by preaching morality to her. He took another tack with Miss Toya, for whom he cared quite as much as she for him; though he took good care not to betray this.

"Very cheap," said he, taking a monogrammed cigarette from a monogrammed case of gold. A part of his method of inspiring the confidence in strangers was to possess elaborate and costly accessories in "strictly good form." "Very cheap, my dear Kittens. You shouldn't get too familiar with such people. You're judged by your companions in New York; and if you're seen in company with a girl whose telephone number is on the lists of all the club operators, well . . ." He spread his hands with a deprecatory gesture. "The hotel, too: somebody might see you going in there—"

"I only went in to show her my ring," said Toya defensively. "She was awfully nice to me when I was green in the show business. And I wanted to make *him* look cheap. I wanted Lily to see, if he was so *smart*, why don't he show *her* how to get rings. I hate that Milton Lazard—always acting like he's somebody and smarter than other people, and he's less than nobody at all."

They had entered the waiting taxicab, and Toya ordered the driver to go through the Park before heading for her tailor's address. "The Lazard kind flourishes here in New York like nowhere else," Arcy went on. "That's because nobody knows anybody—or anything. It's just pure cheek, and keeping up appearances, that wins you anything here. If you're modest and don't dress your part, you land in Harlem and stay there. But I can't understand this Lazard, if he's got any brains at all, letting that girl do what she does. I suppose he don't care: he figures he'll just use her until something better comes along and then drop her. By the

bye, I hear he's horned himself in somehow with that crazy, flighty, dyed and painted old woman, Mrs. Carolus Lang. I remember him now at her reception the other night when I went to write it up."

"That Milton Lazard—at *her* place! Why, how on earth did he? She's a *society* woman," gasped Toya; and Arcy laughed tolerantly. "But she *is*," insisted the girl: "she's always coming to our show and sitting in a box with lots of young society men—don't I see her?"

"She pays the bills, my dear Kittens," explained Arcy: "boxes and private supper rooms and orchestras and rag-time entertainers. And New York is full of young society men. They come here from other cities with a few good letters of introduction and a dress suit. They make a good appearance, so they get jobs as brokers' clerks or selling stock or something down in the Street, and they always 'dance beautifully' and have 'charming manners'; and get in sometimes with the 'brass band set'—the bunch that are always having their names in the paper for doing nutty things—even to the 'small affairs.'" All of which was the merest jargon to this child of the lower West Side; where still dwelt her honorable and upright foreign parents, from whom she carefully concealed any such acquisitions as her new jewelry on her Sunday afternoon visits.

"So," went on Arcy instructively, "when these fellows want to enjoy themselves along Broadway, they get on the string of some rich outsider who pays for their pleasure. They're hired by Mrs. Lang just like the nigger orchestra. As for her being in *society*"—he laughed—"her husband might be because he's a really big man—and *being* that, he doesn't care any more for it than he cares for her, and he lives over in Europe somewhere, collecting pictures. But she's quite 'impossible'—as *they* say. Her foolish-looking dyed hair and her horrible white, vicious old face might be overlooked, but she hasn't the brains to make her vice anything but cheap and repulsive. A fellow like Lazard could just about appeal to her—"

"O-oh," said Miss Toya angrily, "I'll tell Lily!"

"Don't be an ass," he advised; "can't you see getting rid of him would be the best thing that ever happened to her?"

"I know, but she *loves* him," argued Toya.

"Yes, and children love to lick stove polish and puppies like to eat shoe blacking, but it isn't good for them," Arcy returned.

"But I'd *like* to do it—I hate him so," insisted Toya. But—Arcy's brows contracting—she hastened to take his arm and murmur endearments and apologies. "I won't if you don't want me to," she promised.

"He'd explain his way out of it: a woman always believes what she wants to believe; you'd only make enemies of both of them. They'd be telling stories around about you that Leeminster might hear—about your going around with me, for instance. You were very foolish to show those earrings and that ring, anyhow; but I knew there wasn't any use telling you not to wear them—might just as well try that Joshua trick with the sun as tell a woman not to put on the newest thing she's got—even if it's on a desert island and there's nobody but the birds to see her. But you didn't say anything about Monty Kane and that European trip, did you?"

"Oh, *no*, Arcy," she protested, but she protested too solicitously and he shook his head, keeping his temper with an effort.

"All right, if you want to lose Leeminster," he said: "you know that about slander loving a shining mark; and slander comes from envy. If you make those chorus girl friends of yours too envious, they'll surely start lying about you to all the stage door Johns, and it won't be a week before Leeminster hears. And then, good night, Leeminster!"

"I wouldn't care a bit," she pouted: "I'm tired of listening to him tell me all those foolish things he does about being his 'little white angel on a pedestal' and his 'fragrant unplucked flower' and all that stuff. I feel so uncomfortable. And he looks at you so: just like—well, I don't know what, but funny! If he

ever kisses me, I'm through with him—there's just something about him I can't stand—"

"Well, I never told you to go around with him," returned Arcy: "you knew him before you knew me. But since you're doing it, I only showed you how to get some of those things you're always complaining about because you haven't got. He's playing a game with you: I simply showed you how to play back. It doesn't do *me* any good."

"Oh, I know that, Arcy," she hastened to say; "but it's so tiresome for us not to be able to be together more." She snapped her little teeth viciously. "He'll have to pay dearly for *that*!"

The taxi drew up before her tailor's. "I do wish I could get something *big* like Violet Vandam did from that Perine and then tell Leeminster good night," she said gloomily. "But I hate to give up my taxicab account, and where would I get the money to go to tailors like Koenig and places like Madame Marguery's for dresses if he didn't let me send the bills to him? And—" She looked at the sapphire ring almost as she would have looked into her lover's eyes.

"I'm not telling you to do it—you suggested it yourself," said Arcy impatiently. "Don't try to put the blame on me and say I was so jealous I robbed you of things I couldn't give you myself. I know you women. You want somebody else to make your minds up for you, so you won't have to reproach yourself if things go wrong. Go on in and try your suit on."

"You go ahead and drive anywhere you want to while I'm in there," she urged eagerly.

He shook his head, but concealed his distaste for the proposal: that was quite a different thing from riding with her at another man's expense because *he* could offer her only street cars, to which he did not share her great aversion. "You go ahead with your appointments, and call me up after the theater," he said.

"And you'll be at your place, waiting for me?" she asked anxiously. He nodded, then strode off down the Avenue.

III

"It's all very well for you to be so all-fired moral. But if she were your girl and you were in my position you'd do just the same thing. You see, I'm crazy about her, Bobbert. And it's the old half-a-loaf stuff—understand?"

The explanation to his friend of his relations with Miss Thiodolf had been brought about because of Arcy's refusal to sup at Curate's—the famous restaurant which his home-town friend very much desired to see; and in the company of one like Arcy who called celebrities by nicknames. So annoyed had he been by Arcy's stubbornness that, sooner than bring about a breach, Arcy had been impulsive enough to acquaint him with his reasons: Toya was supping there with Leeminster. This confidence he immediately regretted when he saw looks of shock, pain and disgust mingle on the face of young Mr. Branch. In the society of the small Southern town, the birthplace of both, there was nothing even slightly analogous to Arcy's present equivocal position.

"If *I* were in your place I wouldn't wait a minute," said Branch indignantly, finding his voice again. "I'd either make her give up *him* or me. If she hesitates she can't care very much for you—"

"But you don't get the angle," interrupted Arcy irritably, "the viewpoint of her class: she can't see why she can't have us both so long as the other affair's platonic. And she sees to it, I'm sure of that. His letters are enough."

"*You read another man's letters!*" asked Branch in a rising tone.

"Oh, my God—cut out that superior attitude! Listen—you're not in Greenborough, where life is laid out on simple lines. This is that large and well known city surrounded by water and money, where things are complex.

"It's these rich men," he went on, scowling, more uneasy at Branch's silence than at his protests; "why can't they stick to their own class? But no! They've got to have their own women and everyone else worth having, too—if money will do the trick. And they've

got a patience that's wonderful. And cunning—say, they go after these girls in the show business and in the shops and artists' studios just like they go stalking big game. They're not satisfied to take the experienced ones—oh, no! They want youth, and, if possible, innocence. That stirs their jaded blood. And they don't care how long they stalk or how much they spend or how low they descend."

"That doesn't make *your* end of it any more decent just because *they're* rotten. You ought to forbid her to have anything to do with them."

"Listen, Bob," said Arcy, losing his patience and pounding the table; "you don't seem to realize what living in New York means. These girls get twenty a week. That would give them everything in Greenborough: they could live in nice neighborhoods and have nice things to eat and nice clothes and everything. Here it means living in a dirty street, in a dirty apartment house with paper walls and no privacy, with the smell of leaking gas and bad cooking in the halls—or else miles out in the suburbs where they have to take crowded Subway or Elevated trains late at night and stand for men giving them the eye and crowding up against them in the seats and speaking familiarly, and doing about everything else to make them feel cheap and common—when they're as pretty as Toya is. And then a walk, alone, through a lonely neighborhood at midnight. So that part of it's impossible. Then there's boarding houses: decent ones where you have any food fit for human beings cost at least twelve a week—and for a hall room at that. Which leaves her eight dollars to dress on and for carfares. Well, she might get away with that, but there's three whole months in the year when the show business is practically suspended, so money has to be saved for that. Precious few are lucky enough to get into a success like 'The Bonbon Girl' every season. Failures mean three to eight weeks of rehearsal without pay. Then if a girl doesn't want to leave New York, she must rehearse for three or four shows a season, not counting the

intermissions between jobs. While on the road they get twenty-two dollars per—they raise them a little—and it's almost impossible, traveling, for a girl to have a clean bathroom and a clean bed and decent food. It would be all right if they weren't thrown in touch with a life of luxury all the time. But they are."

"I'm not thinking about her: it's about you, Arcy," began his friend defensively. "You—"

"But I'm trying to *explain me*," exploded the exasperated Arcy. "Those rich fellows deliberately make these girls dissatisfied with the way they've been brought up. If the girl's a nice young thing, on the lookout to defend herself as mamma has taught her, they get the theater manager to introduce them in the most polite, respectful sort of way. A lot of them put money into shows just for such privileges. Then they take her to tea some place where she feels shabby and badly dressed among a lot of idle, gaudy women. And he sends his car to take her home from the theater some nights. And pretty soon he tells her he knows some *modiste* who could make clothes that would just suit her: he'll introduce her and the shop will trust her. Then he says he hates to think of her eating at that cheap boarding house or in those hashhouses—or home where mother cooks cornbeef and cabbage. Some hotel or restaurant advertises in some Wall Street paper he owns or has a share in (generally a lie, that, but it's a recognized part of the system) and he takes out the advertising in restaurant bills. And, as he never uses it all up, it won't be costing him one penny if she signs checks there for every meal she eats every day. Same way about a taxicab account."

"And so it goes on—they've got a thousand tricks: the game's been worked out as scientifically as chess. There's the friend-gone-abroad, saves-money-if-she-lives-there, have-to-get-a-caretaker-for-apartment-if-she-don't, dodge. Anyhow, if they really go seriously after some young girl, no matter how touchy she might be about accepting money, in a few weeks they've got her used to eat-

ing expensive food, taking a taxi to go a block, sitting around in smart restaurants, wearing Paris clothes—and, maybe, living in a beautiful apartment. Now what a chance they're ever going back to smelly Harlem flats or cheap boarding houses, to being jostled and insulted in crowded street cars, to wearing little cheap ready made suits and imitation lace collars! You read about it in books, Bobbert, but it doesn't happen in life, believe me. The girl does one of two things: she either becomes his mistress—which means she'll last with him a few months or a few years, and then has to hunt another; or else, if she's clever, she invents some excuse for putting him off and thinks up some other way of getting his money. And if the last happens, he hollers 'blackmail,' and calls her every kind of name. After he's deliberately taught her to need the things. A hot lot of sports they are!"

"I agree with you," gasped Branch. "Good God—what people!"

"Well, that was the way with Toya," Arcy pursued. "If she hadn't met me, she'd have fallen for Leeminster, I suppose. There's a fine young hypocrite. Belongs to Uplift Leagues and Civic Betterment Societies and Anti-Boss Politics—has a reputation as spotless as the driven snow; passes the plate every Sunday in one of the fashionable churches—a vestryman, I think; and makes speeches at silk stocking political meetings about 'Down with immorality. Drive the women off the street. Put out the red lights.' Those fellows can't understand why anybody should want to be immoral but themselves. But they don't call their way of doing things immoral. Oh, my, no! Immorality, my dear Bobbert, paints its face very thickly and wears loud clothes and doesn't go to church."

"I'm glad I stayed in Greenborough," said Branch indignantly.

"Everybody there keeps too good a watch on one another for much dishonesty or immorality," was Arcy's cynical answer. "I guess it about comes down to that, Bobbert. And that goes for countries as well as people.

Switzerland has the most honest government as well as the most moral people—it's the smallest. And the United States, which is the largest, has the most dishonest government, and—"

"Don't say that about our people, Arcy," Branch interrupted. "America's not New York, you know."

"It's New York and Chicago and San Francisco and the big cities, though, that influence the rest of the country," Arcy replied gloomily. "Look at me, for instance. Down in Greenborough, I had the highest sort of a sense of honor. Why? Because that was the standard. I come up here and find the only standard is being a 'smart fellow.' And being smart means getting money. . . . You know, I can even understand those fellows who live off women, now. Not that I haven't just as much contempt for them as you have," he hastened to add before Branch could break in with a shocked exclamation; "I saw one of them today—the worst kind they breed, I guess; and my disgust at being in the same room with him almost made me spit on him. He *was* a low specimen. . . . But take a fellow who means well but who's just weak, and put him in my position. (This is my day off or I wouldn't be sitting around talking to you, bet your boots on that.) Here I work on the *Argus* about twelve hours a day; hardest kind of work reporting is—chasing all over the city following a dozen ends to a story, seeing a hundred people a day, snatching a sandwich and a cup of coffee for dinner, generally, then off again for half the night, sometimes *all* night if a late story breaks loose and you have to get it for the lobster edition—the late one. No extra pay for overtime in our business, either. Well, then I meet Toya and go and have supper somewhere—that's *my* first real meal, and my first chance to enjoy myself. And the only places open are the all-night restaurants.

"Now take a man like that who's got a girl. They get home past daybreak, and he's supposed to be at the office by eleven. Now figure—the alarm clock goes off and he's dead to the world, but he has to drag his heavy head off the

pillow and forget his aching body and snatch a cup of coffee and off. And every time she says: 'Oh, dearest, take a day off. Get some sleep. You're killing yourself. Sleep until two, then we'll go for a ride and have lunch out in the country.' I guess that sounds rotten! I wouldn't listen, because I'm looking forward to a career; but imagine some fellow who hasn't got much strength of character. He does. Then he listens again, and finally he loses his job. She says: 'Don't worry, dear, we won't starve.' Well, he gets another job, and this time he isn't so scared of losing it. The next time he loses it he don't hurry getting another. They drive around and go into the country as she said, and go to professional matinees and get up late and read novels and what not. Well, finally, the last time he's out, he has such a bad 'rep' for unreliability it's hard to get in again; and he takes that for a sop to his manhood: he tells himself 'I *tried*, didn't I?' every day. But, really, he's enjoying himself loafing around, having all he had when he worked, and not having to work. And, pretty soon, he says: 'What fools fellows are to work themselves into the grave for that little bit of money I made!' He's thinking about how easily the girl borrowed a century note from some rich man.

"Well, that can't keep up, though. Pretty soon they pawn her jewelry. Then, he don't ask her any questions as to where the money comes from. . . . And all the while he's kidding himself the big opportunity of a lifetime is going to come and hunt him up, and he was wise to wait for it instead of wasting his time on a small job. For most of 'em make less than I do and have to be at the office at *nine* o'clock, not eleven. That's where these vice prevention societies are all wrong about these 'cadets.' Women make as many as they make what the papers call 'white slaves.' It's funny, Bobbert, but there are very few people in the world that deliberately start out to be vicious. Most of them wouldn't know the truth about themselves if you showed 'em:

they'd be insulted. They've been kidding themselves too long."

"I hope you'll remember that in your own case," said Branch significantly; then added hurriedly, fearing he had implied too much: "But what about this fellow you saw today—if so few are really vicious?"

"Oh, he was an exception," returned Arcy, frowning. "What a big rat he was—pfugh!—don't let's talk about him. . . . But what do you mean—in my case? What do I gain from Toya seeing Leeminster? I'd be better off if she didn't. The jewelry she gets doesn't help me, and I'm on pins and needles whenever I have to ride in the taxi with her. And I have my position just as I always had, and when we're out together I pay the bills. We don't even live together. Don't get any wrong ideas, Bob. I, personally, don't want Toya to string Leeminster. But I'm not so selfish as to take away her chance of getting a lot of valuable jewelry that will make her independent so if she's out of a job she won't have to stop her French lessons and all that. The poor kid quit school at thirteen and went into a department store. That jewelry will pay for the education that's so necessary if she's ever going to get up in the profession. My wages are just about enough to support *me*."

"Oh, well, I dare say you've got plenty of excuses, Arcy," yawned Branch: "you'd have to have for you to mix up a game like this." He looked at his watch. "Well, old man, as this is my last night in New York, I'm going to see Curate's: I wouldn't dare go back to Greenborough without having seen it—and all the celebrities."

"All the *celebrities* catch the last train for the country," growled Arcy: "they don't hang around supper places; they've got something better to do. It's people who're trying to *be* celebrities. But if you're determined, I suppose it's up to me. Come on."

IV

CURATE'S, famous from sea to sea, the scene of farces, novels, a thousand short

stories and a million newspaper paragraphs, was in its heyday at that time, and in full flower the hour they entered it—past midnight. All the pretty faces and shapely forms that the audiences of Broadway musical shows had admired earlier in the evening seemed to be here; their escorts, for the most part, middle-aged men whose assumed rakishness sat ill upon them, and younger ones who, it seemed, had found it necessary to drink heavily that it might not be unbecoming to them also: both sorts (in the main) of the unmistakable "Avenue" brand, their impeccable dresscoats, collars, ties, flat-heeled pumps or shoes, and the width of their dress trousers braid, exact duplicates each of the other. It seemed a sort of uniform. To be in the slightest degree original, to vary from type by so much as a larger or extra shirt stud, marked the outsider: it was that dreadful and unforgivable calamity, "bad form": a different viewpoint from that day of real elegance in grooming, the Regency, when he with the taste (or the valet) to invent attractive novelties of attire was the most fashionable: different from the viewpoint of any rational age. But, when conventional men hold power, conventionality must be capitalized, must become a virtue. And every one of these conventionally attired men was a member of exclusive clubs, the holder of a name honored by ancestor worshipers or by Dun and Bradstreet, a part of past or contemporary history.

"It's funny how quickly New York turns individuals into types," Arcy had once said to Toya. "You know those hollow lead moulds that confectioners pour hot candy in and take it out shaped like a man. There must be one of those around here. Those fellows come from everywhere: from all classes; not half of them are born gentlemen, not a quarter born New Yorkers. But, all of a sudden, there's another thin-legged stork looking exactly like all the rest. One tailor in New York not only makes clothes for those fellows but picks out shirts, ties, boots—everything that goes with it. They'd as soon be seen walking the Avenue in their pajamas as wearing something he didn't approve."

J. Tubman Leeminster was not one of the latter sort, Arcy, despite his dislike, was compelled to admit. The Leeminsters dated from the days when "York" was substituted for "Amsterdam." So far as the "Street" was concerned, no Leeminster had ever been forced to take money from the unhalloved hands of its original owners: Leeminsters left all that sort of thing to more recent people; or to those unfortunates of their own class who were burdened with *bourgeois* ideas about love in connection with marriage. Frankly, like embarrassed peers, the Leeminsters had long since looked on marriage as a vocation. They acknowledged their inability to cope with climbing commercials on their own ground: besides, what need, when such would presently invade theirs? So they allowed the new people to make the money, and then, as a great favor, agreed to share it. For three generations, Leeminsters, male and female, had exchanged social position for large quantities of newly laid golden eggs which it then became their life-work to scatter in the manner most agreeable to them, and most disagreeable to their constitutions. With the result that this later Leeminster was a young man of singularly vacuous countenance, scanty hair and an unhealthy pallor.

To see this person with Toya was like a burning brand thrust into the face of Arcy MacTea. "Damn him!" he said viciously. "To think I have to sweat twelve hours a day for forty dollars a week, and he gets everything just for being kind enough to live!" He checked himself, remembering. "He doesn't, though, Bobbert," he added, with a grin: "he's got to marry now he's had his fling—Miss Mae Hefflefinger, the daughter of the fellow who makes those hams you see advertised so much. 'Mae'! I'll bet he shivers every time he sees that Riverside Drive spelling. She'll be 'Mary'—or 'May' at least—on the wedding announcements; see if she isn't."

"And he has the nerve to be seen at supper with another girl?" asked Branch.

"Oh, Bobbert, you weary me," pro-

tested his friend. "Curate's is as far from Canary's as the Argentine Republic. The women of his set don't come over on Broadway except to go slumming. And then they pride themselves on being Continental; and, in Paris, if the Faubourg St. Germain crowd goes to Montmartre and sees a duke with a pretty *figurante*, they realize it isn't *his* fault: *they* aren't expected to *be* there; so they pretend they never saw him there next time they meet—officially. . . . You're thinking of Green-borough again; where there's only two hotel restaurants and everybody has to act like they're in church."

Arcy was talking rapidly, almost feverishly; for Toya was looking toward him; and he must present an appearance of indifference. He knew her nature well enough to realize that one of his strongest holds on her was her belief that he absolutely lacked jealousy—which made her suspect he did not sufficiently love her, and increased her own infatuation. So he resolutely refused to catch her eye. To all appearances, he might not have known of her presence. Now he threw one leg over the other, which turned him completely from sight of her, and continued his animated monologue.

"Look at this bunch in here tonight. There might be a dozen 'professionals' eating after the show because they're hungry; and a dozen more out-of-town people, Harlemites and Brooklynites—though the headwaiter don't give many seats to people he don't know, not at this hour, when the tipping's at its height. The remainder are just Dyak head hunters. Look at these girls. Hardly one's twenty-five. This kind of men want chickens—'flappers' *they* call 'em. When girls get past the flapper stage, if they haven't laid something by, it's them for the college boys. That's the first step downward, and it's fast after that, unless they marry or make good on the stage. And these fellows don't *want* 'em to make good and get independent and choose whoever they want. They discourage it. 'What do *you* want to stick around a stuffy theater for, and sit in cold dressing rooms?' they

say. 'A pretty girl like you don't need to. Most of these actresses have to get ahead because they're so unattractive to men. But you . . .' And, will you believe it, most of those poor conceited little fools fall for it. I heard one of them pitying the best known woman star in America, because she saw her plainly dressed, hurrying along on foot, while this girl in a flaming gown rode past in a motor car. Pitied her! Imaginell!" And Arcy burst into a boisterous laugh which was only half real.

But his merriment fled instantly when a uniformed page was heard moving near and murmuring as if to the ears of all at large: "Message for Mr. Mac-Thyndall. Message—" Arcy called him.

"You, sir? Telephone message," said the page, and let one eyelid droop the merest trifle, which he knew would increase the size of his tip: the note's only connection with the telephone being that it had been written at the operator's switchboard. Lacking the easier opportunities of the foreign supper places where men and women have a common retiring room, Broadway had long ago hit on this method of communicating with some other person in the room without arousing the suspicion of escorts. One simply excused oneself to telephone, and there wrote the message, which was delivered as if it had come over the wire.

"Pardon me, Bob—I wonder how they knew I was here?" said Arcy hypocritically, as he opened the envelope. "Go next door to Noel's, dearest," he read. "I'll pretend a headache or something and get him to put me in a taxi, and I'll just drive round the block and come back. How's the Kitten's papa, precious?" The note concluded with a row of "x's," the approved method for the germless transmission of kisses. Guiltily, Arcy tore it up.

"Lucky she wasn't with me when I got *that*," he said aloud, pretending wholesale roguishness. "That girl must have telephoned every place along Broadway. . . . Well, I suppose I'll have to go, Bobbert."

He noted, grimly, that his friend, who

had taken so strong a moral stand on his other peccadilloes, seemed to consider this deception—as he supposed it—of a trusting mistress quite the merriest sort of jest. “And she sitting here all the time!” Branch chuckled. “Say, hasn’t this one got a friend? Can’t you butt me in somehow?”

Arcy was beginning to weary of Branch. They had been school and college chums, to be sure; but Branch had not progressed in worldly wisdom. Even had Toya’s supposed rival been real, and had she had a complaisant friend, Arcy would not have introduced her to the Greenborough man. Such sophisticated maidens only suffered boredom when they were well paid for it.

Then, with a sudden blush for his stupidity, Arcy realized that Branch’s viewpoints were identical with those of the very men he had been excoriating: Branch was the average American: what an ass he (Arcy) had been to try to explain the philosophy of quite another world!

“Don’t take all that seriously I was telling you, Bob,” he said, forcing a laugh. “I only met Toya Thiodolf last week; and I haven’t any more to do with what she does than you have. I was only talking to see how much I could shock you; and you fell for it—ha, ha! You seemed to expect to be shocked in the big town, so I couldn’t bear to disappoint you. Of course you’re right. She’d have to give Leeminster up before she could be *my* girl. I never thought you’d swallow all *that*, honest! Oh you small-town kid!” By this time he had managed to make his laugh hearty. “So long. Call me up to say good-bye before you take the train South.”

Branch gripped his hand as of old. “I’m willing to know I’m a mark to hear it isn’t so about you,” he said: “I’d never have got over your being *that* kind of a fellow, Arcy. It would have put me in a horrible hole if you ever came back to Greenborough and I had to invite you over to the house where my sisters are—and where the sweetest little girl in the world’s going to be within the next year . . .”

V

NOEL’s, only a door from Curate’s, owed its continued existence very largely to the fact of this proximity; for, although Arcy MacTea was yet to discover it, most of its patrons had reasons for being there somewhat similar to his own.

There is no Noel’s in the Broadway of the new generation—a generation being but half a decade on Broadway. But then there existed a night life not dissimilar to that of Paris; of which Curate’s represented the center, the Manhattan Café de Paris; Noel’s, one of those Montmartre cabarets or bars where gather well dressed Apaches, minor poets and actors. When this place had opened for the eleventh time under the eleventh name, Noel, who was risking all the savings he had gained as a captain of Curate’s waiters, had gained permission to have a small door cut through into Curate’s by which his waiters might come to fill those occasional orders for food which his patrons might give. These in the past history of the place had never been sufficient to defray the heavy cost of maintaining a kitchen: without the loss from which the place could easily be made to pay, as drink orders had always been numerous and were three-quarters profit, sometimes more.

But Noel had never imagined that this was the door to fortune. A modest profit on his investment was all he had hoped for. The existence of the door, however, by one of those curious paradoxes which give life its unfathomable aspect, soon made it impossible for Curate’s to handle Noel’s numerous food orders and provide promptly for its own customers; so he was forced to provide his own kitchen, after all. Forced? It was now the pleasure of his life; for it added another ten per cent to his already doubled expectations.

But, although his waiters no longer needed the door, unless it was to procure some unusual brand of liquor or cigars, it still remained in constant use. To close it, in fact, would have been to close Fortune out. One girl had learned of

the door soon after Noel opened, and had used it to enter the place—bareheaded, uncloaked, ungloved, surprising everyone—to spend some precious minutes with the object of her affections, while the other man, smiling in the fatuous belief that he had made a conquest, was at that moment in Curate's, imagining she had gone to rearrange her hair or powder her nose. Within the week hundreds knew of the door: a knowledge they disseminated among their kind, carefully concealing it from any others. Thus, on following nights, Noel was covering serving tables with tablecloths and putting in extra and incongruous chairs.

That week Noel began the practice of locking his front door, admitting no one from the street farther than the cloak-room vestibule until he had lifted the curtain and scanned his would-be patron's face: a proceeding that enabled him to plead a lack of vacant tables to any whose presence would complicate affairs for those already within.

And so, as he seemed to be making a determined effort to keep the public out, it used all endeavors to crowd his place. To be admitted became somewhat of a *cachet*, a certificate of standing in Subterranea. He was careful to exclude, at least, all whose personal appearance did not indicate prosperity. Nor was this enough; sartorial splendor must be supplemented by adequate spending or one soon lost honor: Noel could pick and choose now, and he did.

Arcy found favor in his eyes on this, his first appearance, and of the crowd in the cloakroom that awaited Noel's pleasure was the first to be admitted. The ex-waiter-captain congratulated himself on his discernment when his new patron was immediately hailed by that ornamental fixture of his restaurant—Mr. Milton Lazard: deep in whose debt Noel was, for Lily Lamotte was among the first who had used the door in the wall. Since then Lazard had herded in from other cafés many friends and associates. These had become Noel's steadfast patrons: entering around midnight, remaining until dawn; hence calling themselves 'The Breakfast Club.' For them,

even on the busiest nights, the southeast corner was always reserved.

Arcy was insensible to the honor of Lazard's recognition, mentally anathematizing Toya for forcing him to identify himself in public with such a person. He approached, therefore, somewhat sulkily.

"Mr. Einstein, Mr. Brown, Mr. Carey, Mr. Satterlee, Mr. Cotterel—my friend Arcy MacTea. As fine a lot of gentlemen as ever scuttled a ship, my boy. Just as harmless as a lot of baby rattlesnakes. You can trust them with anything you've got if it's nailed down. Take your hand out of the gentleman's watch pocket, Kid Einstein. Always ask a man for the time and see if he won't give it to you before you try to take it. That's what they call etiquette, you black-muzzled, cliff-dwelling kike. Although I know some men so mean they wouldn't let you set your clock by their watch: closer than the next second. Take out your glasseye, Carey, and do a trick for the gentleman. Hurry, hurry, hurry," he bellowed in the tone of a circus barker; "the show is now going on, on the inside. The Chandelier Brothers will jump from chandelier to chandelier—through the eye of a needle—without the aid of a net. On your left, the wild man is about to devour a raw Jew." He bent down as though addressing from a platform some passers-by below. "How did you like it, sir?" "Rotten," the invisible one was supposed to answer. Lazard raised his voice to the barker's bellow again: "You hear what the gentleman says—'Best show on the Island.' That's what they all say. Only a nickel—half a dime."

You are to imagine this monologue punctuated by bursts of wild laughter and the applause, not only of his companions but of many parties at nearby tables. Lazard, conscious of his conspicuousness, made his voice reach as many as possible, succeeding sometimes in engaging the attention of all present; for it was an intimate room; narrow, low-roofed; its patrons crowded together on leather seats along the walls, the center cleared for dancing. But above the din and

bustle Lazard's bellow rose whenever he considered he was about to voice some iconoclasm that would add to the reputation he coveted: that of "the man who owned Broadway," "the human night-key of New York," "the man who locks the town up"—such descriptions bestowed by reporters being coveted by semi-celebrities of the Nightless Lane.

Lazard had learned since their meeting that Arcy was a reporter; hence the altered attitude; and, despite his dislike, Arcy was amused. Quite a different person this from the scowling, snarling, unshaven satyr of the Shadenham. His smile was agreeable, his teeth evenly matched and of an extraordinary whiteness; his gestures and inflections were those of one with a genuine talent for clowning. Arcy laughed as loudly as any, and, refusing the proffered refreshment, insisted upon paying his initiation fee. To which Lazard objected loudly, tossing down a yellowback and challenging the waiter to dare receive any other: an openhandedness he took care should never be overlooked; the impression going abroad that he was both liberal to a fault and annoyed by a surplus of wealth. Even his intimates were not allowed to imagine Lily Lamotte in any way responsible.

"A good little pal," he would assert patronizingly; "a good little pal. I know I can get half of everything she's ever got—only the poor little kid never has anything by the time she gets the bad news from the rent man. And say, I'd *stop* the bad news myself; but as soon as you start *giving* women anything you're *gone*. Go to 'em clean as a snow-bird and they fall. But if *you* start handing shed and doughnut sugar, they start handing it to some nice boy they'd like to see get along. Just mother instinct, I guess. Take care of *them* and they think they're cheated. But let 'em give *you* anything, no matter how petty larceny it is, and it makes 'em happy. They think they're supporting somebody. That's why it's all banked in my name. If I let her know she's drawing fifty a month more than she hands me, she'd blow me tomorrow. I even kid her I'm using some of it. . . ."

Which plausible explanation with a condescending loftiness of delivery belittled the insignificant Lily Lamotte and exalted her amiable consort. The reputation of being an object of the affections of one for the pleasure of whose presence others paid liberally was coveted by Lazard; but he resented bitterly its concomitant reputation—resented it because it gave rise to the inference that his own splendid talents were unable to provide plenteously.

Fearing that such an ill impression might have been made upon Arcy, Lazard now set earnestly to work to remove this and replace it with one of a gentleman adventurer, a soldier of fortune, a romantic figure spinning cobwebs of conspiracy, a hero of splendid hazards. Beads of perspiration stood out on his countenance, as he concentrated on comments and narratives at once humorous and thrilling—in which he was always the central figure.

VI

It was to the possession of this narrative ability that Milton Lazard owed a laborless life. This accomplishment had early discovered for him his natural element: where young women passed the hat among the listeners; finding, after one or two physical mishaps, it was less hazardous to impose upon females. Equipped with a faithful companion, then, he followed her fortune through the mining camps of the West; until that section knew him too well. Followed one experience with melted tar plus eiderdown, and an enforced ride astride the narrowest of seats; forcing him to seek the protection of the less barbarous East, accompanied by the prettiest (and youngest) of his many admirers.

His one talent, like his deformed body, was part of an atavism: his paternal ancestor some centuries removed having worn cap and bells in the service of a feudal Fleming, who, in the interest of mirth, had ordered that the illegitimate child of one of his serfs should be deliberately maimed in childhood that he might be forced to adopt the calling

of jester and tale teller: Sieur Huon shrewdly guessing that a love child, by so splendid a young animal as the serf girl, would inherit to the full the talents of his father—a wandering troubadour, *jongleur*, Rabelaisian-Villonesque poet.

Always there is some explanation for such monstrosities as Milton Lazard: the sins of "humanity" are visited upon the "civilization" that permits them. Hedged about by powerful lords and their ladies, the terrible pain that Sir Huon's wanton cruelty had caused to torture the unhappy jester must be crushed down, hidden from the sight of men. But the hate and malice it had engendered had been too strong to die unexpressed: at intervals the jester's family tree bore gallows fruit; even to the twelfth and twentieth generation. But it had not been until Milton Lazard that the exact portrait of the wretched *jongleur's* son, save for the humped back, was repainted: the huge head, the puny legs, undersized feet and hands. His nature was that same strange mixture of fear and hate, cowardice and cunning; he had the same ability to make jests when there were curses in his heart: he deferred to the strong and tortured the weak. All men and women were, to him, created for but one purpose: that they might be of advantage to him. And his ambition was to lead a life of laborless ease. To him, men who won success by work were not admirable but laughable.

It was a pernicious doctrine he preached; but it had the same doubtful merit of flashy wit that the quips and quirks of the jester had; who always chose sacred subjects for his highest flights. And there is that in men, especially young men, that fears protest lest it show a conventional viewpoint; they fear being conventional more than being wrong. Certain aspects of life are revealed to the clever youngster as other than what they have been taught; so that it is easier to assume that hypocrisy alone shields all other aspects than to discover the truth. Moreover, it is easier to be brilliant at blaming than at praising.

Arcy MacTea being at this earlier

stage of mental development, it was not long before Lazard had removed his dislike: even, as the drinks circulated, caused him to be so eager for the praise of a high priest of the super-knock, that he ventured into those realms of conversation forbidden to the discreet. . . .

VII

"WHAT were you doing sitting there and laughing with that Milton Lazard?" demanded little Miss Toya sharply. "Do you want people to talk about us the way they talk about him and Lily? And after what *you* said to *me*! And there's three girls from our show in Noel's. Tomorrow they'll have it all over the theater!"

"That's rich," returned Arcy, somewhat unsteadily—the night air had not yet blown away the fumes of many Scotches. "You telling everybody you do what I tell you to do and what a smart fellow you've got, and then blaming *me* if you get a bad reputation: I've warned you hundreds of times. And who *asked* me to wait in Noel's? What kind of people did you *expect* me to meet there? Would I have known Lazard *at all* if you hadn't introduced us?"

Toya had no answer for so many arguments. If she had been sufficiently gifted to voice her subconscious thought, her reply would have been that his business was to rectify a flighty, inexperienced girl's mistakes, not to add to them.

Unless one counts those girls unfortunate enough to be infatuated with him—in which cases he had always taken care to select grossly ignorant or brainless ones—Lazard had less success in convincing women than men. Women, if they are not blinded by passion or vanity, seldom err in detecting baseness of character; seldom fail to be aware of the hallmark even if they do not appreciate it. It is only that their sense of logic, being a scant half-century old, has not been sufficiently developed to give synthetic reasons for results; and this is to their benefit rather than to their hurt; for one cunning of argument may twist to his will the thoughts of those who put

their faith in it; while a woman, whom the subtlest philosophy influences not at all—in personal matters at least—is not turned by it from her original impressions and purposes. So—

"I don't like that Milton Lazard. He's no good. Please don't be seen out with him, Arcy." Finding her anger unavailing, she had descended to a more dependable weapon. "You know he doesn't like *you*. He's jealous of you: he hates everybody who's smarter than he is. If *he's* so bright, why's Lily doing *what* she's doing? Terrible; an awful nice girl like that—if you get her by herself. But he has such a bad influence on her. I wish he'd go and marry that rich old woman, Mrs. Lang. Lily would get along all right then—"

"Lazard hasn't got anything to do with what Lily is," returned Arcy irritably. "He's a fool, smart fellow as he is, to stick around with that kind of a girl. What was she when he met her? Just the same. Wasn't even bluffing at the stage . . ."

"Lily didn't *tell* me she supports him," defended Toya indignantly: "I just *know*. *She's* always saying he makes his own money, too. But I'm surprised at *you*, Arcy: supposed to be smart and everything . . ."

"It's a good thing I've got a regular job and people see me working every day," returned Arcy, "or I suppose they'd be saying the same about me. I tell you, Lazard's made all kinds of money. He don't care about her. He's only sorry for her, afraid she'll commit suicide or something if he breaks away. *He* can't change her any. She's got no *ambition*. She don't *want* to study like you do. . . ."

Toya shrugged her shoulders. She ceased to argue, for Arcy had taught her that what she considered argument failed to convince anyone; but her vision of Lazard was unalterable. "Well—you'll see," she could not forbear adding, however, as they entered Arcy's rooms.

Arcy had a studio apartment overlooking the rector's garden of an Episcopal church which, save for the ivy-covered brick wall which hid the sidewalk, gave him an uninterrupted view of

lower Fifth Avenue. Here it was like London. The houses had that beauty architecture alone cannot give—age must assist. There were polished brass knockers on white paneled, mahogany or rosewood doors; pilasters that had the grace of ancient Doric columns, spiral handrails of green bronze or of brass, ornamenting short flights of long, thin marble doorsteps. In the basements below, in the drawing rooms above, were window boxes of brightly colored flowers or of creeping plants; on either side of doorways closely clipped dwarf evergreens in miniature tubs, or else, where there were wooden doorsteps, more oblong boxes of flowers. More than one house was set amid rose-trees, hydrangeas, chrysanthemums and other hardy growths. Only the rector's garden was walled: this, which Arcy's windows overlooked, was a long, pleasant lawn, a fountain in its center bordered with flowers, in the pool of which swam gold and silver fishes. Here the nurses of a *crèche*, where workingwomen left their children for the day, were allowed to bring their small charges to roll amid garlic and buttercups and clover—for it was like a piece of meadow brought intact on a magic carpet. Robins and swallows, in spring, nested in the ivy or under the quaint chimney pots of the old rectory; and these, no doubt, had brought the pollen of those growths of the open country. Occasionally cat-birds came, blue jays, too, and in an old hollow tree a swarm of bees had recently installed a queen.

For these sights and sounds Arcy had been willing to disburse almost half his weekly wage: and before meeting Toya, had spent much time seated at the large bay window watching and listening, pen in hand, to record the inspiration of the moment: Arcy's ambition had been the production of historical novels; and in this Old World corner, staring at stained glass windows to the accompaniment of the mellow pipe organ rolling forth Gregorian chants, his blood had been stirred by the exploits of his dead and gone heroes, and finding the inspiration he sought, he had written steadily and well.

Toya's advent had changed all that. He had not added a chapter to his novel since their mating. Yet still his surroundings served a purpose. Coming down here away from the tawdriness of Longacre, she had been impressed and had begun to realize there might be reasons after all why he would not readily marry her; even though his infatuation had swept away most of his resolutions. And she, being wise beyond her years, had ceased to speak daily of marriage; finding a safer road to its achievement by adopting new tactics.

"It isn't as if you'd taken up with one of those big cats," she had purred; "it's only a little kitten, and her papa can teach her anything he wants her to know, can't he?" Here she nestled closer to him. "And he can make her an educated kitten that he'll be proud of, too. 'Cause it's a smart little kitten—it's a smart little kitten," she crowed. "Isn't it, papa?"

Which, were chroniclers honest, is a saner speech than most endearing ones exchanged between infatuated young couples. And it had delighted Arcy. "That is a smart kitten," he approved; "and her papa will see it gets its little education." Neither seemed greatly in earnest, but neither had ever been more so. On the following day, Arcy had laid out a course of reading for her, and had taken her to a retired governess who was to superintend, and assist in, her study. Singing lessons had followed. The reformation in clothes had come before that. All of which had so impressed the great Bob Ledyard that, when he had put on "The Bonnet Girl," he had promoted little Miss Thiodolf to a small part. And where J. Tubman Leeminster had once pursued perfunctorily, an amateur collector after a pretty butterfly, he was now as grimly determined as an enthusiastic naturalist chasing the rarest of Venus moths.

It was on the subject of Leeminster (his favorite grievance) that Arcy spoke when they sat before the small studio fire that the early autumn chill had rendered necessary. "Here we could have been home long ago," he said gloomily. "How am I ever going to get my novel

done if I have to wait for you three nights a week before I eat my supper?"

"But you used to say you didn't enjoy it unless I was there," she reproached: "you don't care for me like you did at first. That's what I get for giving myself to you. You're beginning to get tired of me. If I'd held you off the way I've done with all the others—"

"O-oh," returned an irritated Arcy, "it's because I *do* care. It just makes me wild to think a fellow like that has the power to 'command your presence' just like a king. . . ."

"But think of what the jewelry alone is worth, darling dear," the girl pleaded, slipping down to the hearth rug and resting her head on his knee. "Suppose I'm out of a job. Or you are. Or if either of us is sick—or anything; we'd have these. And he's going to give me a big cabochon ruby some time this month. I know his little game. He's getting ready to tell me he's got to marry that Hefflefinger girl. How did you find out about her, Arcy? You never told me."

"It wasn't printed because old man Hefflefinger owns stock in one of the big newspaper syndicates; and he doesn't want the engagement announced until everything's settled. Those big newspaper owners swap favors, suppressing news if it isn't *too* big. The lawyers are fighting it out. Leeminster's attorneys want too much: the marriage settlement, you know. Leeminster won't take any chances with papa-in-law's generosity. He knows the viewpoint of the plain people about a husband who lives on his wife. He's seen too many things happen to other men in his set. The purse strings make the monkey jump: if the wife holds 'em, he must jump her way. Can't get anything to spend unless he explains what it's for. And where would he have the money to buy you cabochon rubies then? He's only getting it now—at loan shark interest—on the strength of his coming marriage."

"He was telling me that tonight," said Toya indignantly. "He thought he was being *very* smart—said there was a rich girl who *wanted* to marry him, and he was letting people think he was going to,

because the moneylenders would let him have lots of money that way. I wasn't to let on he was going to marry me. That would ruin everything."

"You bet it would," agreed Arcy: "the girl, of course, is going into this with her eyes open: money for social position. But she's making her old-fashioned father think she really loves Leeminster, and that he loves her. Only his people won't recognize the match and call on her unless Leeminster's put on his feet and made independent. The old man swallowed that, somehow—so the society woman who gives our society reporter his inside stuff says—another broke aristocrat. But if Pop Heffle-finger ever found out Leeminster didn't care for his daughter, didn't intend to be any more of a husband to her than he could help—Lord! Pop's after a grandson and heir, and if he thought he would get one only so that the kid's parents could lay hands on the rest of his fortune, the thing 'ud be o-double-f, *off*. . . . Why, what's the matter, Kittens?"—for Toya had begun with a ripple, ending with a spasm of laughter.

"Suppose he saw the letters Tubby wrote me," she finally elucidated. Arcy nodded. No glimmering of what he was to do had as yet lit up the matter of those letters.

"Well, I should say so," he agreed. "I was just thinking something like that tonight while I was waiting for you. About twelve girls in evening clothes without any wraps or anything came in and sat down with some fellow for a while and then went off again. Lazard explained to me about the door in the wall: told me who the girls were. I got to thinking. The men those girls had left in Curate's all had big fortunes. Not one could afford to get his name in the papers with that of a chorus girl. Yet, when one throws a girl down—as they always do—if the girl tries to get anything they call it blackmail, and then lawyers scare her so she shuts up and forgets it—"

"Serves her right for giving in to a man she doesn't love," yawned Toya, uninterested in the affairs of her own sex. "You'd have done the same if

you hadn't met me," accused Arcy. She denied this indignantly; and the colloquy veered to more personal grounds, became a minor quarrel. Which ended as such affairs generally do in interchanges of endearments quite too silly for a place on a printed page—even in a day of Indianapolis fiction less mentally nourishing than the confectionery it endeavors to imitate.

VIII

ARCY found himself wakeful that night, so in that enchanted realm just preceding slumber, where imagination becomes reality, saw himself addressing the young men to visit whom those twelve girls had come through the door in the wall. He did not fancy their lack of character in permitting the girls to worship both Eros and Mammon; but his own complaisance in the matter of Toya's suppers with Leeminster led him to make excuses for them. He saw himself urging them to advise the girls to save tangible evidence in the shape of letters, telegrams, cancelled cheques and so forth and with them regain their independence; arranging the matter through a lawyer's hands in a perfectly legal way. It was then that there occurred to him the significance of Leeminster's letters to Toya: letters written during the "try-out" of "The Bonbon Girl," to various outland theaters. They had already served one purpose: reading them had convinced Arcy of the absolute innocence of Toya's relationship, for Leeminster wrote as respectfully as to a girl of his own class.

Arcy, who possessed an uncommon memory, now visualized one or two. They were the sort of letters any girl would be proud to receive from a fiancé. . . . Arcy chuckled hugely. Toya could have what he coveted for her: a finishing course at the Paris conservatory, emerging therefrom polished, accomplished, possessed of *savoir faire*, fit to adorn the stage of any country. With her beauty she need never return to America unless she chose.

It was all he could do to keep from

awakening the girl and acquainting her with her good fortune. But, he reflected, it was as well to be silent even to her: she would find it difficult to avoid crowing over her triumph, surrounded each night by envious, or admiring, acquaintances, ten girls in her dressing room alone. No, it would wait until the announcement of Miss Hefflefinger's engagement to Mr. J. Tubman Leeminster. Then the bombshell, before Leeminster could play his hand—which Arcy imagined would be to tell Toya he was marrying "Mae" only to gain the huge settlement; after which he would behave so badly that she would be forced to divorce him—"and—then—sweet-heart . . ." Meanwhile, although a cruel fate withheld his name from her for a brief space, were they not truly one in divine sight? . . . Not original, truly, but it has convinced millions, will convince millions more, *is* convincing thousands at this moment. To Leeminster, it meant the capture of the quarry or giving up the chase.

Early on the following day Arcy visited Toya's apartment, took Leeminster's letters from their all-too-evident hiding place, and in her name hired a safe deposit vault for their safe-keeping. Toya, at her singing lesson, knew nothing of it; nor did he inform her: even went so far as not to mention again to her the possibilities the girls who used the door in the wall were overlooking. But, finding this topic ensured attention at Noel's, he spoke upon it many times for the edification of Lazard and others of the patrons: his visits to their rendezvous being another explanation not vouchsafed Toya. Her dislike for Lazard permitted no common sense view of their acquaintance. Now and again, Arcy had an uneasy sentience as to the superiority of her intuition over his logic—in this matter at least.

But it was not difficult to understand the attraction Lazard had for such as Arcy. There were many others not of Subterranea to be found in his company: besides the reporters for theatrical journals, several actors, a poet, a writer of popular songs.

In none did he inspire that friendship

which is the wonder of women. None were solicitous of his welfare, none would have placed their purse at his disposal in misfortune. They sought Noel's as audiences seek out that theater advertised as having the most amusing play. Lazard worked hard for their laughter; like the comedian over the way who was paid his weight in gold yearly, he came to his evening's performance rehearsed and ready.

To the craftsman in humor, who must grind out laughs by the yard, Lazard's method would have been apparent. His was not spontaneous humor: he worked by formula, was amusing only on certain subjects. A detective couldn't catch a cold: couldn't find the third rail in the Subway: couldn't locate a Saratoga trunk in a hall bedroom, and so on, *ad infinitum*, regarding the stupidity of detectives, a mere reversal of the average belief in their astuteness. As for thieves, another class popularly supposed to be clever, a thief couldn't steal a bunch of grass from Central Park, or a handful of water out of the East River without getting an icicle down his back; or a swindler couldn't get a biscuit for a barrel of flour. Philanthropists wouldn't give the Lord a prayer; were closer than the next second. A woman who aimed at society—he was referring to Mrs. Carolus Lang at the time—"couldn't get into the Haymarket"—a disorderly resort—"with a letter from the Pope." . . . The latter phrase yields a second key to his method: an irreverence that stopped at nothing. There were no sacred things to Milton Lazard. Once, when in straits more desperate than usual, he had deemed it a rare jest to send to his old mother a telegram announcing his own demise, asking for funds to save the body from the Potter's Field, signing the name of a friend who received the money and who shared in the spoils—the mother, on an annuity, having hitherto refused to pauperize herself further after yielding for years to his demands. He told this story as a *chef d'œuvre*. But it was not until after Lazard's betrayal of him that Arcy subjected his wit to

analysis, discovering its mechanics. For the few weeks of their acquaintance, he hardened his heart to any inner whisperings that hinted the acquaintance was a mistake. And Lazard played his fish like the veteran angler he was. Such tales as his imposition upon his mother were reserved for other ears. He knew Arcy's limitations—as he would have described them—and stayed within them; for he was anxious that the reporter should be his friend.

Lazard was, even then, contemplating marriage with Mrs. Carolus Lang: the doctors' reports from the Cannes chateau tending toward the belief that the veteran financier would not live out the year. But before Lazard could be married again, he needed money that he might divorce the concert hall singer he had married away back in the days of his youth: had married because she was just then the rage of mining camps and earned a large salary, and because she would not yield it to him in any other way. But she had soon been supplanted by a younger and better-looking woman. Now she was singing in the moving picture houses, and needed money herself. She had written, in answer to his question, that she would divorce him if he paid the expenses and gave her a thousand dollars. He had not yet the courage to approach Mrs. Lang for a loan. After succeeding in impressing her that he loved her unselfishly, he was not yet sure enough of her to dare arouse possible suspicions that he was mercenary. And Lily's earnings only sufficed for expenses.

It was in Arcy that he saw his salvation: the new jewelry Toya was displaying seemed to Lazard but the natural concomitant of cash she must be receiving. He judged Arcy by his own standards and could not believe that he would fail to profit by his wealthy rival's infatuation. Himself, he would soon have driven Leeminster away by his greediness. "Never mind the junk," he would have advised her; "say you need money to pay the mortgage on the old home—he'll fall for anything." Which was the reason Lily Lamotte kept her admirers so short a time.

Lazard had not the foresight—even in his unpleasant occupation—to play the waiting game. Like most potential criminals, he was too eager for immediate rewards.

His resolution to ask Arcy for half of the necessary money for his divorce—he had some of his own, laid by without Lily's knowledge—was hastened by the events immediately following the announcement of Leeminster's engagement. For, on that same day, Toya's lawyers approached Leeminster's with photographs of the letters, the announcement of a breach of promise suit to be instituted, and an inquiry as to whether their client wanted to compromise. Leeminster had made frantic efforts to reach Toya for days preceding this announcement; but Arcy had deemed it wise that she should plead sickness, absenting herself from the company and retiring to Atlantic City—so that Leeminster might imagine the suit was brought because of imagined unfaithfulness. Whereas, if she would only give him "a chance to explain . . ."

As he failed to locate her, either before or after the announcement, and her lawyers were obdurate: either he must compromise within two days or the suit would be filed—he compromised. Knowing old Hefflefinger's distaste for the engagement, anyway, the absolute certainty of his fierce denunciation and the severance of all connections, once those letters were published, he had recourse to the twenty per cent men again and paid over one-tenth of the hundred thousand demanded.

Needless to relate, these latter developments were not recorded in the public press; and all might have gone well had Toya been able to restrain the delight of her realized ambitions. But she was, as has been stated, in the company of many other girls each evening: ten dressing room mates, all of whom she considered her dearest friends. They knew, of course, that she was giving her two weeks' notice, was departing for Paris; and as they pestered her with questions as to her financial fairy, presently under the seal of confidence—she being wild with desire to confide in somebody, any-

how—she told several. And Lily Lammotte carried a bitter wail to Milton Lazard.

"... always telling how smart *you* are, and what have you ever done for *me*? And running that Arcy down. And look what he's done for *her*. And he hasn't made her cheap and common doing it, either, although you say they're both liars. Well, if they are, nobody knows it. She can hold her head up. And she'll come back and be a star after studying in Paris, and what'll I be? A tramp just like I am now. Oh, I wish I'd listened to her. Everybody always said I was out of my class being with you—"

"You bet you were," he returned savagely. "But you used a stepladder, not a diving bell. You were so close to the ground when I met you, you couldn't kick a duck in the stomach." He had caught up his hat and coat and now slammed the door behind him, divided between elation and resentment: overjoyed that Arcy should have no excuse now for refusing his request, hating the reporter bitterly for having succeeded where he had failed—he the infinitely superior man. He had lost caste in the eyes of the girl who worshiped him: a state of affairs that might terminate in his losing Lily before she ceased to be necessary.

But his egotism did not permit him to admit even the possibility of Arcy's superiority. He laid it to a pestilential luck, growling viciously at the man who was to benefit him: "a half-wit if ever there was one," he told himself, remembering Arcy's "narrow-mindedness" which compelled him to delete some most delectable details from his favorite stories. "Just a lucky little sucker," he added, and regained the stature lost by Lily's harangue.

He was again the patronizing critic of the universe when he entered Noel's. Arcy was not there. It was past theater time and, since Leeminster had been eliminated, he came only while waiting for Toya to finish her performance, over an hour before. Lazard repaired to other and more seemly restaurants; but the pair were to be found in none of them.

And then he committed a grave error of judgment: he should have remembered Toya's intense dislike for him, should have realized Arcy would not advertise his acquaintance with him, Lazard, lest she hear of it. But now that the money seemed so near, he could not wait: he plunged on downtown and rang Arcy's doorbell. The door was opened by Toya, who, with the sleeves of her shirt-waist uprolled, was assisting in packing. She viewed Arcy with disapproval when he welcomed his visitor.

"We're sailing day after tomorrow," he added. "The *Chartic*. Excuse me if I go on working, will you? Have a drink and a cigarette, or a cigar—they're all in that little cellaret over there." Toya had not greeted him; nor did she. Lazard began to realize he had chosen an inauspicious time and place. "Didn't know you were busy, old pal," he said, taking up his hat again. "Meet me tomorrow and have lunch, will you?" But a glance at Toya's mutinous face told him he had again erred and that, as she was free at that hour, she would make it too uncomfortable for Arcy to keep the engagement. Therefore—

"I'd like to speak to you a moment now—in private," he said. Strangely enough, Toya seemed to disregard this entirely: even when Arcy excused himself she did not turn. He led Lazard into the bedroom and closed the door. Simulating stress and suppressed excitement, Lazard told a story of dire need: a loan that was being called on a piece of property worth ten times the mortgage value—he would give him a duly certified mortgage on it tomorrow. Meanwhile his postdated cheque would guarantee Arcy against loss.

There is no doubt that Arcy would have refused; but he would have found excuses for doing so: money tied up just then, would arrange it next day—thereafter avoiding Lazard until sailing day—such moral cowards are men. But he was saved the lie. Toya had thrown open the door, her gesture dramatic. "I'd like to see you lend any money to that poor thing!" she said; then in a fulmination of scorn: "I thought you were up to some tricks so I listened.

What do you take us for, Milton Lazard? Think everybody's a softy like poor Lily? I'd rather throw it in the river than lend it to you. You're so *smart*, why don't you get some of your own? *Smart!!* Yes, to silly Lilys who don't know anything!"

Black hate bubbled in Lazard's mouth; his eyes burned. "I guess if that Leeminster knew what you doped up on him, it might cost you more'n I asked for," he said thickly. "They call that blackmail." At which Arcy, hitherto annoyed with Toya, shifted sides.

"So that's the kind of a big rat you are, eh?" he asked. "That closes your act with me." As Lazard clenched his fists, MacTea caught up the fire-tongs. In these strained positions they remained a moment: until Lazard, with an ugly laugh—for he had thought of something from which fire-tongs were no protection—turned and strode rapidly from the room.

The waiting taxicab, the cost of which would have been but a drop in the ocean of what he had expected to bear away, now irritated him beyond measure; so, observing that the chauffeur dozed on his seat, Lazard, closing the house door noiselessly, hurried away. The same malice that had caused the misshapen jester to visit poisoners for potions of red toadstool, which, dropped into the drink of the men-at-arms, would punish them with cruel griping pains for their sport at his expense, now seethed in his descendant. That Slavonic servant girl to insult *him!* That poor little lucky sucker to call *him* a rat!! Why hadn't he beaten their heads in—he could have wrested those tongs away easily! Not willing to admit to cowardice, he told himself it was because he had a better way to pay his score. He grinned, he sneered, he went into ecstasies of gloating . . . and, long past midnight, after visiting three clubs, he found Mr. J. Tubman Leeminster; who received him with almost as distant an air (Lazard's exaggerated clothes betrayed him) as had the club porter. Which, threatening Lazard's self-estimation as it did, almost ruined his object by sending rudeness to his tongue tip. He controlled himself,

however, and spoke without emotion. . . . If someone had deliberately tricked Mr. Leeminster, had repaid his favors with ingratitude, entering into a most iniquitous plot against him . . . was it worth Mr. Leeminster's while to know? He referred to Miss Thiodolf—to cut short a long story. Leeminster darkened. What did he mean?

"She never had any intention of marrying you. She was in love with another fellow. She only wanted what you could give her; was going to throw you over anyway? If you could prove this, could you get back that blackmail money?"

"Blackmail?" thundered Leeminster.

"What else?" asked Lazard.

A moment of silence: then, unable any longer to command the venom that his brain was spewing into his mouth, Lazard became vicious. "She had a fellow long before she ever met you. She didn't aim so high as you before. Any kind of a man would do." So full of hate was he, he had to shut his lips tightly lest he betray himself. It is not certain he did not believe he was speaking truth. Were that heavy-headed guy and that heavy-footed girl superior to him and his? Getting himself into better control, he piled up disgraceful details for Leeminster to hear: realistic and convincing details culled from ugly personal experience. And then added stories read in sensational newspapers: a drugged drink, a promise of marriage, a horrible awakening . . .

He had seen how solemnly the public believed such tales: how effective they were in arousing editorial indignation. Himself, he had not found it worth while to angle for innocent girls: poverty had already done the work drugs and promises of marriage were supposed to do; but poverty did not make melodramatic reading, and it shifted the blame onto the shoulders of those upright ones bent on suppressing "the traffic." Women who plead poverty for an excuse did not get the sympathy, attention, widespread publicity of those who sobbed of lurid lures. Lazard knew many girls who had discovered that the

easiest way to escape legal penalties was to disclose harrowing details of organized "cadet" bands of which they were victims. He, even more unscrupulous, had no hesitation in adding anything that would put Leeminster in a rage, that would ensure extreme measures.

"A white slave?" gasped that young gentleman; whose taxicab accounts and jewelry had made a few—as the phrase has come to be used. But he had done so quite legitimately—for his royal pleasure: and he was not for a moment to be confused with those abandoned wretches who did it for a livelihood.

Lazard was overjoyed. "A white slave," he confirmed, rejoicing at his acumen in adding the effectual melodrama. "A white slave, that's what." He was possessed of his ancestor's crafty coward's intuition: had seen Leeminster would not be receptive to any evil tales of Toya: therefore Arcy should suffer for both. "And that's the fellow who'll be spending your money in Europe in a week or so!"

Leeminster started up, kicked over an ottoman, stamped noisily about the private cardroom. Exhausting his vocabulary, he sputtered: in wild wrath, he banged his fist on a little green-topped table which, being collapsible, collapsed. To hear him one would have imagined he had given Toya the purest, most unselfish devotion. If, almost, he deceived Lazard, certainly he deceived himself. He was Sir Galahad the Spotless, rescuer of maidens from monsters, Perseus arming himself to save an Andromeda and slay a dragon. One might have believed he was superior to wounded vanity, hurt pride, the loss of money, the desire for revenge. For the moment, it seemed Miss Heffle-finger's fortune might go hang: mattered only the rescuing of "that poor little girl." . . .

Lazard knew when the first fury had spent itself Leeminster would return to sanity; realizing on the way that no steps could be taken which would jeopardize the announced alliance. Which would forbid any prosecution for

blackmail, even for obtaining money under false pretenses. The blacker the girl's character the less able he would be to explain satisfactorily those letters. This became apparent to Leeminster after a moment of calm consideration. Then as violently as before, "I'll half murder that blackguard," he breathed heavily. "Where can I find him? Wait till I go home and get a horsewhip. Then you just point him out to me. I'll settle him."

But Lazard, having won, was suave. "And get your name in the papers and have the whole story come out? Let the law settle him. Oh, I know"—this to Leeminster's impatient wave of the hand—"I know. Not by any lawsuit or prosecution. Isn't this fellow a danger to the community? And haven't I seen you around a lot with the District Attorney?" He paused, seeing he had Leeminster's attention. "Now's where I come in—I don't pretend to be doing all this for nothing: you wouldn't believe me, anyway. I need a thousand. If I show you how to put MacThyndall away for two years without mixing your name in it at all, you'd give me a thousand, wouldn't you?"

For a moment Leeminster did not answer: sat sneering, staring with fishy eyes. "I suppose you're another one just like him. You've been friends and he did something to you—eh?" Lazard, crushing down a desire to close those cold, superior eyes, rose and, having studied human nature over the poker table, and knowing the value of bluff, made for the door. Leeminster stopped him. "I don't suppose it matters *why*," he grumbled grudgingly. "Set a thief to catch a thief. All right. If he goes away you get your thousand. You'll have to take my word," he added, anticipating correctly the request on Lazard's lips: a bitter blow to the parasite, unprovided for this, having been too occupied with his hatred to think of it: imagining the money paid down that night.

But his brain was quick enough in such matters. "If you don't pay me, I'll let MacThyndall know the whole business anonymously, and, as I won't

figure in it, you'll get into trouble," he said insolently.

"I didn't expect one of your stripe to understand a gentleman may do anything but break his word—even to a blackguard," was Leeminster's contemptuous retort. "Go ahead."

"Well, then," said Lazard, after a sulky pause, "there's a door between Curate's and Noel's. While you fellows are in Curate's with these girls, they make some excuse and slip into Noel's to tell the fellows there when they can get rid of you."

He enjoyed seeing Leeminster wince, regained some of his enthusiasm. "She's not the only one. There's fifty or sixty girls do that. This MacThyndall's been talking to them, telling them to go off somewhere and get you fellows to send 'em telegrams and letters so's they'd have something to hold you up with when you try to throw them down. That's wholesale blackmail, ain't it? If the District Attorney lets *him* get away with this, there'll be ten cases like yours a month. You fellows won't dare to have Broadway girls at all. And the D. A.'s one of your bunch. Well, do you know how the D. A. or the chief handles a dangerous guy that they can't get anything *on*? They 'frame' him, drop a gun in his pocket; then they have some strong arm guy pick a fight with him, and plant the gat while they're fighting, lose the other fellow and arrest the one that's framed for. When he's searched before they lock him up, they find the cannon. Pretty neat, eh? I'd like to have a dollar for every fellow they've put away like that."

Forgetting his grievance, Leeminster clenched his fist, almost lashed out with it at the malicious, self-satisfied, grinning face. Remembering, he transferred his hatred to the one who had mulcted him. "Will you tell Mr. Knipe what you told me?" he asked sourly. "About that door between Curate's and Noel's and how this fellow's been advising you and your fine friends to wholesale blackmail?"

"If my name's kept out of it, you bet I will," was Lazard's savage response.

"I'd like to see that guy's face when they find the gun."

"Come on then," said Leeminster. "We'll catch him if we hurry." He did not find it necessary to state that the official sought played poker at the River Club until a very late hour. Nor did he wait for the porter to summon a taxicab and receive his legitimate commission both ways. Which gave rise to grave doubts in the mind of that functionary whether or not Mr. Leeminster was really a gentleman.

IX

WERE this tale told in the year of the events recorded, widespread indignation would greet the statement that as Lazard conjectured so did it come to pass. But much calcium light has flooded the dark places of punitive departments since the days when the center of the theatrical belt was presided over by the Bennett owls and the statue of Horace Greeley, since hansoms waited at stage doors and their occupants might make merry until dawn. Exposure has followed exposure. To discover what sort were they who could go about the business of assassination in motor cars, the searchlight has soared beyond the clay feet of Manhattan and found its face of brass. Other than one who protects the shame of high places now rules in the office of District Attorney: his hand has helped turn upward the searchlight. But the man who played late at the River Club had personal reasons for wishing to see the sport of kings protected. It was enough that there were rude rascals who poached upon the preserves of gentlemen; but when one bade them stand and deliver besides, an example must be made that would strike terror into his like.

It had been largely through this gentleman's activities that the statute legalizing common law marriages—that is, when a woman had lived a certain number of years with a man she was entitled to the name and privileges of a wife—had been repealed, to save from annoying *mésalliances* many sons of the

rich who had mistresses. Now, when he heard of the activities of Arcy MacTea, he voiced a belief that, should this man go unpunished, here was a danger quite as great: gentlemen soon would be unable to bait traps with luxury and cease supplying the bait, at their pleasure. It was impossible not to do or say something compromising even if one wrote no letters. Which, like that dastardly common law marriage statute, was a direct blow at the liberty the common people had fought to give men of birth and fortune. Were prerogatives gained in a Revolution to be endangered? He guessed not!

But he also did not guess at the fact that he was to bring about his ears a nest of hornets which up to now had been disguised as honey-giving bees. The newspapers had hitherto supported him under the impression that one of independent fortune would be more honest than a professional politician. But, when Arcy, imprisoned at police headquarters, had sworn many oaths as to the outrage perpetrated upon him and had convinced the star reporter of his paper he had been victimized to please somebody—prudently antedating Toya's breach of promise, Jim North had flown to his city editor. The indignant two had sought the managing editor, the militant three had found the owner, and the furious four had called upon the judge who was to set Arcy's bail on the following morning. It happened to be a judge who was well aware of the Bluebeard chamber in the District Attorney's edifice of apparent rectitude, and, as that person had once declined—seeing no gain—to soften the prosecution of a friend of the judge's friend's friend, that dignitary now saw the chance of having that chamber unlocked. But they were of the same party, and even if the unlocking were done by him, he must still keep the secret for the party's sake. So, instead of assuring the furious four that the evidence against Arcy would be found insufficient to hold him, he suggested that, if he held him on small bail, Mr. MacThyndall could take his trip to

Europe and help represent his paper in Paris, as had been arranged—"skipping" his bail if necessary; while the newspaper's lawyers investigated his case and found the Bluebeard chamber. Which suited the irate newspaper owner well enough; this same District Attorney had not shown sufficient gratitude for the journalistic assistance that had elected him.

Thus it was, to the extreme indignation of the District Attorney—for his assistant detailed on the case had done all possible to impress the judge that now was the time to show the lawless that the new law about weapons was going to be enforced—Arcy was freed at so small an expense to his bondsman that one would have supposed the new law was not yet in force. But when he heard who the bondsman was, and that Robert C. MacThyndall was the R. C. MacT. whose initials met his eye each morning at the breakfast table—true Arcy had given his occupation as "newspaper man" but that was a favorite evasion of the sons of Subterranea—the District Attorney's wrath against Mr. J. Tubman Leeminster was terrible to behold; that gentleman, hastily summoned, having arrived, he was restrained from doing him an injury only by the fact that Leeminster was the larger of the two.

"A fine trick you've played on me," he whispered shrilly, in the accents of a scream. "Why didn't you tell me that fellow was a reporter? You let me think he was a grafter—"

"So he was," said Leeminster: "I don't care if he was a reporter or not. . . ."

"You don't care?" bellowed the District Attorney. "Why, I'd sooner arrest a Fourteenth Street politician than a reporter on the *Argus*. Scarthwaite'll never let up on me now; and when he starts for anybody, they're gone. He just hounds you and hounds you and hounds you. I've got to live like a Trappist monk or get out. You've ruined me, Tubby Leeminster."

So it proved. A year later there was a new District Attorney: Leeminster's friend was not even nominated.

X

THAT year was spent both profitably and pleasantly by Mr. and Mrs. R. C. MacThyndall—married since Arcy, by the great luck of Toya knowing the girl from a former show, got the full details of her suicide, which involved the heir of one of America's large fortunes. His wife had long known of his *liaison* but had permitted it because she was freer married than divorced. But the man had left the former showgirl to follow another woman of fashion, and, this being one of the few cases where the girl really cared for the man, not the money, Toya's friend took poison. But, before doing so, she had seen Toya in Paris and had told of this intention should Arthur refuse to return from St. Moritz to their London apartment; and, when the news of her death came, Arcy gave his chief a story to cable that with its developments held the front pages of the New York newspapers for a week or more; forcing the wife to institute divorce proceedings, the correspondent the woman for whom Arthur deserted Toya's friend. All of which belongs to another history which shall some day be related.

Arcy had learned sufficient of the world not to tell of the lucky chance which had given him the details in a lace napkin. He invented, instead, a series of imaginary sleuthings which redounded to his resourcefulness; and the Paris correspondent had urged earnestly that Mr. Scarthwaite increase Arcy's honorarium. Which was not needed when the proprietor of the *Argus* heard it was the younger man who had given the paper the "exclusive" which had made all the other Manhattan dailies hold their injured noses.

Then it was that Arcy had yielded to the oft repeated request of Toya that their union be legitimatized. He had held off, hitherto, for a reason that, strangely enough, was an unselfish one. When first he had met Toya, she was the usual loud-voiced, ignorant chorus girl, considering herself, with neither birth, breeding nor any save a rudimentary education, the equal of all, the superior

of most; brought to this pert and egotistical belief by a false system of public school training, plus the attention and compliments every pretty, youthful girl receives from stage door hangers-on. Meeting men with famous names and finding them bores or beasts, it is not strange such girls should fail to believe in a superior class.

Arcy had changed all that: since she loved him, she feared him and respected his attainments; was desirous of awakening in him more than the cool, kind affection which was all he gave her—openly. She had set herself to win his admiration, to make herself all he seemed to think a woman should be. Otherwise, she would have dropped Leeminster immediately; but she needed money for her music, her education generally. Moreover, she wished to dress as did those Fifth Avenue women whose *chic*, until then, she had not found so evident as that of her sister showgirls; and to save, after the thrifty Slavonic fashion, for summers of no work and many rehearsals. Then, gradually, through his constant mockery of her favorite fiction, she developed a taste for good literature; which, abetted by professional matinees at the better class theaters where she saw English comedies acted by actors familiar with the usages of drawing rooms, gave her knowledge of a class apart from the noisy spectacular brass band set whose escapades and scandal fill the Sunday supplements; a class impossible to respect and easy to emulate in dress and manners, which, unfortunately, with Toya as with so many American girls of the working classes, is the only aristocracy they know.

But, since Toya had learned that there were people not distinguished as to wealth nor willing to sacrifice honor to achieve it—people familiar with the best in books, art and music, she had set up an ideal, and, though she had been slow to achieve it while she remained in New York, she needed only removal from the tawdry life she must lead in dressing rooms and restaurants to begin in earnest. Add to that Paris, the example of

fellow students better educated, of better families than her own, the respect, almost veneration, for art and literature that exists in Paris even among the lower classes, and the society of Arcy's new friends, painters, authors, correspondents and the like, who wasted no time on banalities—and Toya within was soon almost worthy of Toya without. And as she had all the dark mysterious beauty of the Slavs, whose women's eyes are starry and mysterious even when they are thinking of what they will have for dinner; yet was without the Slavonic clumsiness of body, having had a mother of the Czechs, whose grace of motion make their national dances too difficult for any but themselves—to say her mental attainments could ever come within speaking distance of her physical charms would be possible only to one of those who write bonbon fiction or "primitive" plays: in which total changes of character are accomplished between acts and in single chapters.

Say, rather, they came within shouting distance, megaphone distance; which was quite sufficient for so pretty a girl. At all events, she had learned to know good art and good manners if not to like them; and Arcy having selected her clothes for so long, she had developed a secondary instinct as to what suited her type; and now, in a plain, closely fitting skirt cut like a sword scabbard, with a narrow-shouldered coat, long-lined in the back and sharply curved and cut away at the waistline, displaying her narrow waist and rounded torso in a tightly fitting semi-waistcoat of brocaded stuff, a long jabot of the softest and most expensive lace falling over it, she looked like the lady of a seventeenth century Royal Hunt; so aristocratically slender that she seemed tall, her small Greek-featured face like a vivid little flower on a long, graceful stem. It is a trick few women learn: to disregard entirely what are called the fashions, to find a style suited to their type, thereafter adhering to it. It is the device that distinguishes the successful beauty from the merely beautiful one—and is the only thing known to stir Paris, familiar to contempt with the picked beauties

of the world who come to sell their charms in the highest market.

In Paris, then, wherever Toya went, she was followed by admiring, eager eyes. A Russian grand duke had his secretary seek her out to ask for an introduction. An English peer with a famous racing stable named for her a horse that was to win the Grand Prize. She did not dare walk alone on the Rivoli, the Paix, or any principal street: someone was sure to stop his motor and come to walk by her. Here a beautiful woman does not need to be on the stage to attract widespread attention: she has only to be where news is known before it reaches the newspapers—at race courses, restaurants and *revues*; to all of which Arcy's occupation as correspondent took him, and where he soon became famous—for the constant cavalier of a beauty is a man of no small importance in the gay world of Paris. Toya's beauty was better than all his letters of introduction. Without the slightest effort, he met all the grandees whom to know is to know the news before it is printed. The official correspondent of his paper had never enjoyed such intimacy with the famous and the wealthy. As it was soon found that Toya was not allowed to come without him, Arcy was invited to many suppers, shootings, coaching parties and other *divertissements* of English dukes, American millionaires, South American and Russian nabobs. So that Toya had not to argue, as in the past, when she brought up the marriage question. After his increase in salary, she had only to suggest.

Then, as delighted with her new dignity as a kitten with a new bow of ribbon, Toya no longer felt it a necessity to be present at every race meeting. She was seen seldomer in the Café de Paris and more often at symphony concerts and Wagnerian performances; and her teachers at the Conservatoire noted an increased progress in her studies. Being now assured that the man she wanted was tied to her securely unless she herself willed it otherwise, the question of sex was settled in her mind, and she no longer found it necessary to remind him continually, by making fresh conquests,

of her desirability in other men's eyes. And, as ever since they had left America he had forbidden her to accept any presents but flowers, candy or books, she could see no further use in submitting to that boredom that came from their compliments and lovemaking. She now concentrated upon her career with all the extra energy hitherto expended in flirtation; and the only men she allowed to escort her were Arcy's friends and those who were interested in civilized conversation—one of whom had been for some little while that eminent financier, Carolus Lang, temporarily master of his health and an occasional visitor to Paris.

Originally she had been directed by Arcy to use all her powers to persuade some friend of Lang's to introduce her to him upon one of those flying trips; and, once met, to exert herself to the utmost to gain his friendship and confidence—all for a reason with which Toya more than sympathized: vengeance for the treachery of Milton Lazard.

XI

OF Carolus Lang this history is too confined to treat with that detail due his remarkable character. There has been one who has filled near upon half a thousand such pages as this, yet got no farther than the fourth decade of Lang's life. To bring him past the sixth, when he comes into this tale, would require many thousand more: even to picture him adequately, transferring to paper that sense of power which he radiated, conveying that commingling of rapacity and philanthropy, scorn of the public yet desire for applause, hatred of sham yet love of intrigue, militant money making yet a devotion to all that is best in the arts and sciences so absorbing that he desired to share it with all the world and propagate it for posterity—all this would necessitate a lapse so long that interest would be lost in those minor persons who are our major ones.

Arcy had watched the reports of his health like a loyal subject the bulletins of the physicians attending a dying

monarch: that is, since receiving the result of the investigation of Scarthwaite, owner of the *Argus*, which had resulted in the inclusion of Milton Lazard's name. Well for Leeminster had his haste not deprived that *commissionaire* of his commission. Arcy had given them the Leeminster clue, and it had been an easy task to ascertain his habits and to trace him on the night previous to Arcy's arrest.

Had the club porter requisitioned Leeminster's cab, the incident of Lazard's call might have been confused with the hundred other calls of non-members upon members that make up part of any *commissionaire's* average week. But the fact of Leeminster brushing that porter and his legitimate commission aside to enter deliberately the cab of a notorious nighthawk, had limned every detail of the *rencontre* in the non-fading colors of indignation upon the disappointed porter's mind. He remembered Lazard's name, Leeminster's order that the caller be sent to that private cardroom reserved for confidential communications, the exact duration of that particular one—everything necessary to confirm Arcy's suspicion that Lazard had been the instigator of the law's assault upon him.

And for this malignant treachery Lazard was going to pay dearly; that Arcy swore: Toya also. Her hatred for the man turned her into a little fury whenever his name was mentioned. Alone, she had been impotent: now that Arcy hated him, too, so confident was she in her chosen one, Lazard should bitterly regret each separate insult about the size of Miss Thiodolf's feet. She had never been conscious of this failing until he had loudly proclaimed it. Now she was forever conscious of it, and spent much time devising boots and pumps not so short-vamped as to be chorus-girly, yet that reduced the size of the extremities they covered to the perfection of other parts of her body. And, whenever the newest device hurt her, which was often, she thought vengefully of her lost comfort and peace of mind; and, if the requital of Lazard's treachery slumbered in

Arcy, she awoke it. Next to their future, this was their absorbing topic. Ways and means suggested themselves; from such a primitive plan as having Lazard set upon by Chatham Square Apaches and beaten out of all recognition (Toya's) to the Machiavellian methods of Arcy, too artistic to succeed anywhere except inside book covers. Even those nights when some success should have made them serenely happy were spoiled by thoughts of a swaggering blackguard still reigning over his table at Noel's, making ragtime entertainers secondary attractions, continuing to be quoted in theatrical sheets for witty sayings or doughty lies about past adventures. At such mental pictures, Arcy would champ his teeth and kick at the bedcovers: his future would be forgotten. A genuine hatred is like a great mosquito forever buzzing about the ears; until it is slain, it is a wholesale poisoner of days and nights—even of purple ones. Nights especially; for like Macbeth it murders sleep.

During the early days of their exile, Carolus Lang had remained very low. The physicians of a king and an emperor were at the small villa at Villefranche into which Lang had been carried when he was stricken, and which his secretary, Corrie, had hastily hired, paying an extravagant price to get its occupants to go elsewhere. About this time an opera singer just arrived from America told Arcy that Lazard was wearing a magnificent stickpin, a miniature of Joardin's great statue "Io," created by the sculptor himself for the great financier, his earliest patron—a historic thing because it was the only one Joardin ever did. Carolus Lang must be very near his end: even his scatter-brained wife would not dare make such a gift unless he were; and Lazard must have inspired more than ordinary affection for her to take so great a chance. . . . Arcy's violent comments caused the songstress much amusement.

"How *can* he marry her? He's got a wife in Salt Lake City. I'm from there myself: started in the same show with her when she was a big favorite. All of

us went to the wedding: we all thought she was marrying some millionaire. He talked so big we imagined he was backing the show. But one night we heard them quarreling in the dressing room. He was going to leave her unless she handed him her pay envelope—she mustn't even break the seal. . . . I'd like to see the man who'd dare say a thing like that to *me*," she concluded, unconsciously repeating what every woman believes until she is unlucky enough to meet a Lazard and does precisely what she has despised in others.

After Arcy left her, his jubilation faded. Whether Lazard married Mrs. Lang or not, he would have the handling of the Lang millions. Her husband must be warned in time. . . . Arcy hurried home to pack a bag, and catch the Côte d'Azur express to the Riviera. But Toya had news, too: an aviating Brazilian just returned from hydroplane feats off Villefranche had come over to her table at the Volney while she was taking tea; Lang had been seen wheeled about in an invalid chair. If he was out again, the warning could wait. But Lazard's wife?

"Maybe she's dead now, or divorced," suggested Toya ruefully.

"Divorced," nodded Arcy; "he'd surely divorce her, knowing his chances with Mrs. Lang for months." Then, with that genius for deduction that is a concomitant of hatred: "Buy her off—maybe that's what he wanted the thousand for."

"It *is*," said Toya, clapping her hands. "It *is*. But he didn't *get* it. Who'd lend *him* a thousand?"

"If Mrs. Lang's letting him wear that stickpin, fiscal questions aren't bothering him just now. We've got to find out. I'll send a cheque to Bill Byrd and cable to have his Salt Lake agency look into this. Those Byrd men come high but they deliver the goods."

No proof of Toya's hatred for Lazard could have been stronger than that disclosed by the scene that followed; when she wept for anger because Arcy would not permit her to use a part of Lee-minster's ten thousand even to share

in the cost of this investigation. But Arcy was wise. They were not married at that time, and he had heard of separations before when the woman spoke loudly of benefits conferred upon the former loved one. And to be identified, even by exaggerated accusation, with the practices of a man he loathed so much, should never be. None of that shaking of the Leeminster plumtree should be utilized for anything except Toya's own luxuries and necessities: not even for anything in which he shared, even to the slightest degree.

In due time the first Byrd report arrived. The Salt Lake agent had referred the search for Mrs. Lazard to the San Francisco branch. Arcy was now advised that she was singing in the Bellefont Theater, "with illustrated slides." Later, a second report told of her hegira to Reno; and the Reno branch informed him of the hiring of one of those tiny single-story four-roomed bungalows on the outskirts of the Nevada capital; of the filing of an intention to become a resident—after the manner of all desiring a divorce. Such actions foretold a residence of some months at least. . . . "She was poverty-stricken in San Francisco. He distinctly says here that she isn't singing in any of the Reno 'honkatonks.' Someone's supplying the funds," said Arcy.

"There's only one thing *I* can't understand," Toya said, puzzled. "How is it that Lazard has so much money to spend? It isn't like him when he could give her all the evidence she needs to get the divorce right away—on the usual grounds. There's Lily and the girls Lily don't know about."

"It only proves he's given up trying to get money from anybody else and has gone straight to Mrs. Lang," elucidated Arcy, after some study. "Catch him acknowledging about Lily to *her*; even to fake up evidence! Women are suspicious enough anyway"—she gave a little interrupting sniff—"but old women must be the very devil."

With the news of Lang's increasing

good health (telegraphed each day in the Monte Carlo correspondent's newsletter) added to this enforced hiatus at Reno, they could wait. Later, when Lang came to Paris, Toya was introduced the following day; on his next visit, a month later, he dined with them in their little apartment off the Madeleine, Arcy duplicating, if not adding to, the good impression Toya had made. Both received an invitation to Lang's chateau at Cannes, in which he was again in residence. But it was not until their visit there that Arcy felt the auspicious moment for confidences had come. And then he did not make the mistake of endeavoring to hoodwink one so astute by pretending solicitude that was purely unselfish. He gave Lang the history of Toya's dealing with Leeminster and his own tolerance of the parasite. . . . "And isn't that all the more reason?" he finished in a fine frenzy of indignation.

Carolus Lang looked amused but in an ugly fashion. Arcy had known of Lang's long separation from his wife; but he nor anyone had an idea of the intense hatred in which the man held her. Her sins he could have pardoned; he had been as unfaithful as she. But she had made him ridiculous by her choice of rivals. Many had wondered why he had not divorced her. Arcy was the first to learn. For Lang began to explain, in a tired way as though relating a commonplace incident that bored him—

XII

"I LIKE you, MacThyndall. But I'm not trusting you on that account, but because you won't speak of it for fear of your enemy not getting his deserts. I knew all you've told me months ago. I want that precious pair to hope so that their disappointment will hurt all the more. One of my attorneys saw Mrs. Lazard a week after she came to Reno. She's been getting a good fat substantial sum every week, and will continue to get it so long as she keeps her husband's name—"

He paused to indulge in a satisfied

smile. "She's been told to stay in Reno and take *their* money, too. How about that, my young friend?" Arcy nodded, too amazed to be exultant. "But," Lang continued, his face clouding, "that won't prevent him from—Wait," he broke off. "Since you hate him so much, you may be able to think of something I haven't. Ten years ago, even ten months, it would have been easy for me. But this damned affliction of mine has thrown me out of gear. When a man never knows, any time he goes for a walk, whether he'll return alive or drop dead at the first corner, his mind gets atrophied. . . . I'll show you a copy of my will."

He took it from a pigeonhole in a marquetry desk, an inlaid trifle that had once adorned a palace and was listed in collector's manuals at the price of a small competence. Arcy read amazed: To his . . . "beloved wife, Louisa Marie Lang" . . . after certain legacies to friends and servants had been deducted, he bequeathed the . . . "income on his entire estate for life." . . . The younger man repeated this incredulously.

Lang nodded. "And if you can give me some certain way of making her accept it, I'll have a codicil added in your favor. . . ."

Seeing that Arcy was still bewildered, Lang explained; some color came to his cheeks and a sparkle to his eye as he outlined his cherished plans. His money was to be at interest for a certain number of years until, by that weird accumulation known as compound interest, it doubled: then it was to be spent in establishing three institutions for the arts and sciences. Any man or boy of a high degree of intellect who would sign a contract to remain afterward on post-graduate work for five years would be educated free and paid a wage while doing so—these to assist in the work that would be done by the masters of science, who would be induced to come there by providing the colleges with all in the way of instruments, machinery and money that would carry their researches to fruition. One college was to be in America, another in France, a third in Germany; and thereafter, they

would be identified with the greatest discoveries for the perpetuation, saving and ameliorating of human life. Nowadays most great scientists were forced to accept funds of self-seeking capitalists, who grew rich over the result of their discoveries. That would no longer be necessary when the Lang colleges flourished: their discoveries would be for the benefit of the world at large. While, as for the arts, any youth or girl with a decided talent for music, painting, sculpture or literature would also receive his education gratis, along with a small income. . . . Arcy stuttered, mumbled, flushed crimson, trying to find words to express his admiration of so great a humanitarian scheme.

Lang smiled wryly. "One must be either a sheep or a wolf in this world," he said gruffly. "I got tired of being a sheep, so I started to be a wolf. I made the mistake of robbing the rich, though, and they put me in jail as a low person; so when I got out I turned respectable and robbed the poor. I flatter myself, though, that this way I'm doing more good than if they'd spent it themselves. Their grandchildren ought to thank God I *did* rob them." He paused. "However, to do this, I need what I've got. I can't afford to give one-third to have a feather-brained peahen hand it over to a ridiculous peacock."

"One-third—why?" queried Arcy, more puzzled than ever.

"Her dower right: that's the law. Every married woman can get one-third of her husband's entire estate if he dies without making a will. Or she can break any will that leaves her less than that. If she could have divorced me she'd have got that, at least: she couldn't for the same reason I couldn't divorce her: we cancelled out. But if she accepts the will as I've made it—" Once more the ugly smile.

Arcy did some calculating. "But according to your own statement the income from the estate if left at interest will double it in a certain number of years."

Lang nodded, still smiling. "The executors of the will are scientific gentlemen who want the colleges," he said,

"along with my personal friend and lawyer who's with me heart and soul. My dearly beloved little peahen can't survive me more than ten years the way she's going on. And, when she accepts the will, the executors are instructed to sell the larger part of my holdings and invest in certain safe propositions that won't pay any dividends for anything up to a decade—the new Argentine Railway for instance, that afterward will pay the holders of first mortgages something like thirty per cent on their investment; the Philippines and Hawaiian Trolley Company's another; the new Shantung Railroad—so forth and so on—you may be sure I've studied it out pretty carefully. But don't try to take these things for tips: a hundred thousand is the least such ventures accept: such things aren't open to the small investor—don't need to be. . . . Now do you understand?"

His smile chilled Arcy: it was some time before he stammered out that he did. "You mean her income will be entirely in the hands of the executors—they can make it as little as they choose."

"Which means all the more toward the Big Scheme—precisely," returned Lang. "But being a mental lightweight, the peahen would not observe any such possibility. She'd only understand that, if she took her dower right, she'd get one-third as much income. But Lazard would alter all that. He'd want something she could settle on him—and you can't settle annuities. Unless I'm very wrong, his idea is to get possession of her property while she's in love with him, then quit. And, my way, she has *no* property. So even if he didn't suspect a trick—which he's likely to, knowing how I despise her—he'd insist on the dower right. Think as much as I will," Lang added wearily, "I can't see any way to prevent him. If he had a criminal record, if he'd done something the law could hold him for—but he's taken as good care of his skin as an old maid. And that's why I say, if you can tell me some way to make her accept that will, down goes your name in it for a good round sum. Think it over," he added, and pulled a

long bellcord, the old-fashioned chateau way of summoning servants; one of whom, answering, was directed to serve a hot bedtime drink useful for promoting slumber.

But it did not accomplish its purpose with Arcy. He lay awake until dawn endeavoring to discover the last link in the chain that was forging for his enemy. But nothing practicable suggested itself until the following morning when, sipping his chocolate in bed, his eyes remained riveted upon a blue envelope with a white address pasted thereon—the European form of telegram. Then, without the slightest effort, there was suggested that for which he had vainly racked his brain.

He leaped up, threw a dressing gown over his pajamas, thrust his feet into Japanese slippers and hurried down the chateau's cold halls to where Carolus Lang still lay abed. "I've got it!" Arcy almost shouted. Rapidly he outlined what the sight of the telegram envelope had suggested: "That is, if the present Mrs. Lazard dislikes her husband nearly as much as we do."

"Set your mind at rest there," returned Lang, his state of excitement one to cause the royal physicians grave concern. "She does."

"Then it's as good as done," said Arcy jubilantly. And Carolus Lang agreed that it was.

XIII

SEVEN months later Milton Lazard awoke one morning in the Madison Avenue mansion of the late Carolus Lang and reached out his hand mechanically (as he had done so many mornings) for his little sack of near-alfalfa and brown cigarette papers. Despite the expertness of many years, half the tobacco spilled, the other half was blown upward into his eyes; for, as he leaned over to wet the paper with his tongue, a tremendous yawn split his face in two, tears came into his eyes, his body was shaken by a hundred heaves, his mouth twitched abominably and, altogether, he seemed in a paroxysm of pain. The cigarette paper dropped from his fingers; he fell back on his pillow.

Several times he essayed to raise himself and reach beneath the bolster; but it was not until the third time that he succeeded, drawing out a long, thin case encircled by a rubber band which held a spoon. This latter he hastily dipped into the water glass on the carved cabinet that served as a night table; on which was also a cunning device of a great silversmith, a tiny silver figurine representing a Crusader in full armor, naked blade in hand, lance couched at an imaginary Saracen. Lazard pulled at the lancehead, which fell off and dangled by a tiny silver chain, while a flame of ignited alcohol shot from the lance. Over this Lazard held his spoon until the water bubbled and boiled; upon which he filled with it a small syringe he had taken from the case. Into this, removing the piston rod while the water boiled, he dropped four little white pellets. The water drawn in, these dissolved. Screwing on a needle so tiny as to seem but a point of light, he carefully examined his forearm, and finding a place where neither veins nor arteries interfered, he injected into his listless blood the contents of the syringe; then lay back, with his eyes closed, his features relaxed, while the drug coursed madly through his system. A foolish smile came to his face: he stretched out his limbs in an ecstasy of enjoyment, laughing aloud as the pleasant things he might do that day occurred to him. Faster than the fastest moving picture cyclorama, he had visions of an 80-90 H. P. car shooting through the greenwood; the water of the Hudson cleaved before the swiftly moving prow of one of the fastest speed boats on the river; all the pretty girls of the Casino show looked admiringly toward the box where he sat with his new and wealthy wife.

He opened his eyes, enjoying the realization of the present now the necessity for the morphine—to which he had had recourse months before that he might maintain the wit necessary to win his new wife—had been satisfied. Now he rolled his brown paper cigarette with ease, as he lay there in a bed which had once been a king's: a masterpiece of

Florentine bronze, covered with representations of pornographic mythology—Leda and the swan, Jupiter wooing Danaë, Venus and Adonis, Diana and her huntmaids in the brook, a rash boy peering through the reeds—many more such incidents on which a certain decadent monarch had desired to look and look again. This royal couch had been purchased for half a million francs. And a plebeian adventurer now lay upon it smoking cigarettes twenty of which did not cost a penny!

Presently he reached up and pressed one of a row of enameled buttons imbedded in an embossed globe that swung from the head of the bed. A servant appeared with coffee and fruit: another laid out Lazard's linen and clothes, summoning a third who determined to a nicety the temperature of the parasite's bath and, first sweating him, punched and pummelled his face and body into an appearance of health and strength. Emerging in a dressing gown La Pompadour or DuBarry might have envied, Lazard permitted a dapper and impeccably attired young gentleman—who had been waiting for the past hour—to kneel and take measurements, another dapper and impeccably attired young gentleman writing them down.

"You wish us to attend to choosing the cloth? Yes, sir. We will see no one has any of the same pattern as any of yours. Shall we say a dozen lounging suits, three morning coats, one black, with pin stripe black trousers, one gray, one fawn-colored, each with self-trousers; smoking suits (by which he meant dinner jacket), one double-breasted, one single; riding suit, knickerbocker suit—and I should advise Bedford cords, also, sir; they're very smart. (Bedford cords also, Mr. Mink.) Then a house suit braided, with scarlet facings"—the young man seemed to go into an ecstasy. "And now as for fancy waistcoats . . ."

But we need follow this young gentleman no further. When his business was concluded, the valet brought Mr. Lazard's mail in a huge basket; the tradesmen and the begging letter writers, the

secretaries of charities and a majority of those to whom Lazard had ever addressed a single word, all had been busy. He shook his head. "Later," he said; "and I can't see anybody else this morning, Wilkins, even if I *did* make appointments."

"No, sir; certainly not. Very good; thank you, sir," returned Wilkins mechanically. He had trained himself to be an automaton during working hours—although, for many years, he had ruffled it along Broadway of nights, knew Lazard's record and despised him.

"And I'm not to be disturbed by anybody, either," continued Lazard, enjoying his new importance immensely. "I shall be in consultation with Mrs. Lazard and with my attorneys and her attorneys and the late Mr. Lang's attorneys. The will's to be read today. Although, of course, *we* know its contents, naturally. Mrs. Lang knew the day the old gentleman died. He must have gone loony if he imagined anybody with a dome not pure concrete would stand for such foolishness; and I'm going to tell his lawyers so, too."

"And a lot they'll care what you tell 'em," thought Wilkins; but aloud he replied sympathetically: "Quite so, sir. I should if I were you, sir. They want taking down a bit, those lawyer fellows: thieves *I* call 'em, sir."

Lazard nodded his head lordlily. "As full of larceny as Sing Sing," he agreed. "If you locked them up, you could turn everybody in the jails loose. They're just as harmless as a nest of baby adders. Guess they didn't reckon on having a man to deal with, or they wouldn't try to put over a raw one like this will. But they insist on a formal reading and explanation, so here goes another morning to hell and gone." He sighed wearily: Wilkins was to imagine that every moment of his master's day was as precious as rubies.

Below in the great Lang library—hung in Imperial purple, the eagles stamped and emblazoned on draperies, upholstery and on the bindings of the handsome hand-tooled purple volumes, with Empire medallions and bronze carvings on table legs, mantels, chairs, *chaises-longues*, with

the many Tanagra figurines enclosed in glass and Lang's curio cases of Napoleonic relics set into the tops of slim, straight-legged mahogany tables—sat every known species of legal sharp. There was snowy-haired Judge Cheyney (formerly of Fai'fax Co't House, *suh*) but for many years senior partner of Cheyney, Cholmondeley, Isaacs, McGinnis and Salvini—a firm which united all suffrages by having a representative of every prominent race that made up New York's diverse population. Sir Jameson Cholmondeley was of the recognized King's Counsel type: he looked half dressed without his snowy peruke and official robes: he had come posthaste from England—where he represented the British end of the firm—to be present at the will reading. Isaacs was a type of highly educated Jew: he had the face of an artist, save for eyes like a shrewd peddler. McGinnis was a good-natured Tammany type, Salvini, who also conducted a bank for Neapolitans and Sicilians, a florid Italian political type.

Then there were Lazard's lawyers, redolent of Broadway flash and brash: a young Jew who wore patent leather shoes with a lounge suit and a mathematically exact double rhomboid of a four-in-hand secured by a large solitaire, his companion the sort of American who hates foreign countries where a willingness to buy endless drinks does not admit one to the confidence of strangers or put an obligation on acquaintances to lend him money: who noisily applauds flag waving songs and insists the eagle is more than a match for any foreign foe, but who resents extra taxes for armaments and who never enlists in time of war. This person had already said something excruciatingly funny concerning the King's Counsel's habit of carrying his handkerchief in a cuff instead of in a hip pocket: having yet to learn that this latter medium did not exist in smartly cut garments.

Mrs. Lazard's lawyers sat with these latter ornaments to the bar: colorless persons not to be distinguished from thousands of others who wear secret order insignia in their lapels or as watch charms; a couple as characterless as a

glass of water: "pillars of society." They had been endeavoring, for some days, to convince themselves that it showed a proper respect for the deceased when their client remarried within a week; for they earnestly assured the public that they undertook no cases they did not believe beyond reproach. Having succeeded (as usual) in taming their boasted unruliness of conscience, they, like good Christian men, were now glaring at the ruffianly executors—certain staid gentlemen of vast scientific attainments who, with the former Fai'fax Co't House judge, were plotting some villainy to mulct their estimable worthy client, a woman whose character was beyond the reproach of any save rogues.

But skilled in self-deception though they were, the sight of Milton Lazard—in a suit of brown that verged upon wine color, and a flaming striped necktie, his absurdly small feet advertised by buttoned tan shoes with vivid cloth tops, his eyes greedy, his heavy brutal chin flattened over his high collar—gave them uneasy qualms; qualms that were increased by her own attire as she flaunted in on his arm. Her dress was black, to be sure, but so coquettishly cut, so scanty of skirt and tight of waist—"à la princesse"—that it resembled a stage costume more than a widow's grief, especially when allied to a coiffure of piled-up puffs, elaborately waved, and a face enameled so rigidly it seemed to creak when she spoke. If she had laughed, the whole pitiable mass might have crumbled away like wet plaster on an old ceiling. Small of figure and of features, she might have passed at a distance for a costly coryphee; near, she was a mere exhibit of upholstery and kalsomining, of small charms long deceased and denied decent burial.

But she bore herself with the air of a spoiled and petted beauty: too many youths had been dependent upon her for theaters, restaurants, motor rides, gold cigarette cases and silken haberdashery to deny her that admiration as necessary to her as air. To her lawyers and Lazard's she now endeavored to convey the impression of a helpless girl relying on manly chivalry. The Lang

henchmen she aimed to impress as one injured, insulted and irate, yet in her gentle goodness willing to forgive and be friends.

Lazard thinned his lips at this, indicating immense reserve forces, warning one and all that here at least was a mighty fellow grimly determined that justice should be done, able to enforce it, too: reticent and repressed now, but let all who would attempt chicanery 'ware his wrath. Which caused her lawyers to assume an air of virtue, his of outraged American independence; but which went entirely unnoticed by the callous ruffian band, who seemed as contented as pussy cats purring in anticipation of a breakfast of rich cream—all of which endured for the reading of the early portions of the will.

These dealt with pictures and curios bequeathed to societies, clubs and museums; legacies and minor bequests to friends and servants. Once only did Lazard lose his pose: imagining he had heard mentioned as one of the former a certain Robert C. MacThyndall; and for the moment he suspected something sinister in the quiet, assured air of the executor who read. There was too much calm about his companions' countenances, too. But Judge Cheyney's soft Southern intonations had slurred over Arcy's name; and Lazard assured himself he had not heard aright. How might the great Carolus Lang come to such intimacy with an obscure reporter; and in so short a time? . . . Righteous wrath soon replaced the momentary fear when Judge Cheyney came to the section bequeathing "to my beloved wife, Louisa Marie Lang, the interest upon my entire estate for life," a wrath that grew during what seemed an interminable recital of the aims and ambitions of the three colleges of "scientific research" etc. Several times his attorneys thought it part of their duty as legal advisers to lay restraining hands on his shoulders; delaying his fiery denunciation until Judge Cheyney wiped his tortoise shell spectacles, folded over the rustling pages of the heavily sealed document and smiled in a congratulatory manner upon the chief beneficiary;

who, however, seemed as removed from gratitude as if the will had failed to mention her name.

Now she began to flutter in what, no doubt, she deemed an adorably helpless little way; her eyes beseeching her *generalissimo* and her two armies to defend her against a cruel and unexpected assault. It was the opportunity for which Lazard had been training all his life. He fired a preliminary gun in the shape of a portentous frown; and, as he rose, the enemy seemed to give him that grave attention due a foe worth considering.

"If Mrs. Lazard takes *my* advice," he began—and then the batteries of the enemy ceased immediately to be masked.

"You refuh to Mrs. *Lang*, suh?" inquired the ancient judge, a schoolmaster to a schoolboy.

"*Lazard*," thundered the owner of that name, glaring about him in a manner meant to be tremendously annihilating.

Judge Cheyney shrugged his shoulders: the schoolmaster deploring the caning that the schoolboy seemed bent on making inevitable, yet which so offended the master's dignity that he sought a deputy; nodding to that member of the firm more accustomed to bellicose methods. McGinnis rose, his smile calculated to provoke further warfare. "Who?" he asked.

Lazard repeated the information in a louder tone. "And I'll ask you to remember it, too," he added, increasing the insult of his intonation.

"I was under the impression that Mrs. *Lazard* was in *Reno*," returned McGinnis blandly. "Only this morning we received a message from her there. I have it here. It occurred to me you might like to see it." The velvetiness of his Irish voice was never more in evidence, as he tossed it across the long, low Empire center table.

But Lazard let it lie where it had fallen. "I'm not interested in *that* person," he rejoined stiffly: then lost all pretense at dignity as he added, choking: "You know well enough there is only one Mrs. *Lazard* as far as we are concerned."

"But you speak as though there were

two," said McGinnis in blank astonishment.

Something in his look and the amusement of the other enemies caused Lazard to sense again that sinister something the name of MacThyndall had evoked. But, perceiving no tangible reason therefor, he decided it was but part of the usual stock-in-trade of lawyers—first alarm, then attack; and he made an angry and pointless reply.

His and hers were on their feet now. "I must demand that my client be treated with civility at least," said the hitherto passive owner of the patent leathers. "And I wish to remind you, gentlemen, that where you fail in respect to a lady, you may be within your legal rights, but you are not acting like gentlemen," put in one of the commonplace men of the secret order insignia. "In plain words," added the other, "our client considers this inimical to her best interests and will take an appeal—eh, Mrs. *Lazard*?" On this the six of them had agreed, the widow-bride having bowed to the majority when the worst interpretation of her late husband's intentions had confirmed Lazard's denunciations. And, as now he was favoring her with a terrific scowl, she made haste to nod.

"But why, my dear sir?" asked the King's Counsel, though consumed with curiosity and addressing McGinnis who, as spokesman, remained standing. "Why does everyone continue to address Mrs. *Lang* as Mrs. *Lazard*?"

McGinnis spread his palms. "I suppose I'll have to read the real Mrs. *Lazard*'s telegram before they will believe it," he said; and reached across the table where the yellow slip still lay. "Kindly give me your attention, everyone:

"Night Letter.

"RENO, NEVADA, November 6th.

"Whoever sent a telegram stating I am divorced from my husband Milton Soulsbee Lazard lied and forged my name. Cannot believe any such telegram was ever sent unless someone did it as a joke. My husband and I are on the best of terms. He sends me money regularly, as records of National bank here will show. Perhaps my being in Reno gave rise to this rumor. Am here for my health, moun-

tain air, doctor's orders. Will never divorce my dear husband.

"It is signed 'Minnie Lazard,'" added McGinnis, crossing and indicating the signature, while placing the telegram in the hands of Carolus Lang's widow. "'Minerva Mortimer' in parentheses. Stage name, I suppose. And now, Mrs. Lang, that you see how you have been victimized, it is up to you as to what you want us to do in this unpleasant matter. Shall we place the matter in the hands of the proper legal authorities? Or, to save you the unpleasant notoriety, the somewhat uncomfortable sensation of having the world know you have been the victim of a bigamist, we are willing to do what we can to assist *you* if you will assist *us* by signifying your acceptance of the will as executed, saving us the expense and trouble of any attempt to break it."

He paused, taking a deep and satisfied breath, totally disregarding the Lazard lawyers and those of Mrs. Lang, who were loud in accusations of blackmail and conspiracy. As for Lazard, who had been for the moment in a condition of shock, he had now regained his assurance and was proclaiming wildly that the telegram was a subterfuge.

"Don't you think we've got you for that little dodge?" he shouted, shaking his fist in McGinnis's face. "A trick to make her accept a double-crossing will. It must be pretty fishy if you have to stoop to a trick like that. I've got the telegram from Minnie, haven't I?" he demanded of the now hysterical little woman. "I'll get it and show it to you again."

"The point is, however," interrupted McGinnis pleasantly, "that Mrs. Lazard did not send it. As she suggests, it may have been sent as a joke—but the joke is on Mrs. Lang, and we don't care for that sort of joke—I beg your pardon, sir."

He addressed his apology to his senior, Sir Jameson Cholmondeley, K.C.B., who had risen, frowning.

"Gentlemen," he protested, in tones of insulted probity. "Gentlemen—" His attitude coupled with his formidable dignity denoted danger; even Lazard

was silenced when the K.C. turned a chilly look toward him. "I have heard a firm with which I have been associated for nearly half a century accused of an attempt to commit a criminal act," continued Sir James. "Under the circumstances, I feel called upon to repeat my words of last night, and to demand instead of request that nothing be done which will render my colleagues accomplices in concealing a crime." He turned to the youngest member of the firm. "Telephone for an officer, Mr. Salvini," he directed. "Lay before the department the evidence of bigamy against this offensive person Lazard. Let his attorneys communicate with us in future by mail. We will have no more such disgraceful exhibitions. We do not care to hear any more from *you*, sir," he added pointedly, addressing the flag waver, the drink purchaser, who had been most aggressive in his charges of fraud.

There was instant silence; then Salvini's voice could be heard asking that the Chief of Detectives despatch with all speed two plain clothes men. It was evident that he then listened while that official asked for particulars to fill out a warrant. "The name is Milton Lazard, occupation unknown, age thirty-odd, native of Nebraska; the charge is—"

But Lazard had reached him ere now, had placed a nervous shaking hand over the telephone receiver. "Don't—don't!" he entreated. "You've got me, I guess. I'll do whatever you say"—as in another age the misshapen jester, his ancestor, had crouched on the cobbles of the courtyard and kissed his master's feet that the threatening lash might not descend upon him.

Salvini, somewhat disconcerted, beckoned McGinnis, who took his place: the great McGinnis, a power in police eyes, a politician who could with a nod destroy even detective chiefs.

"It's all right, my boy—McGinnis talking . . . yes, Aloysius P. Hold the line a minute." He covered both receiver and transmitter, and turned. "You've got just one minute to decide in, Mr. Lazard," he said. "Leave this room and take your representatives with

you, or leave it in custody. Hurry! I can't keep the chief waiting. He's apt to grow peevish—"

McGinnis grinned. Lazard turned to his lawyers: "It's a frame-up," he said sullenly.

McGinnis uncovered the transmitter. "Chief—" he began.

"Wait, wait," said Lazard, terror-stricken. "We're going—we're going. Come on, boys." And, herding his attorneys, who tried to detain him, he made an inglorious exit.

"Now, Mrs. Lang?" McGinnis used a gentler tone, but did not alter his position at the telephone; though the commonplace men were protesting that such actions were high-handed outrages that all present should bitterly repent.

"It's simply a question of whether you wish to be our friends or not," continued McGinnis calmly. "Yes, yes, Chief," he interpolated; "I ask you to wait, please. . . . Mrs. Lang, you see how impatient he is. . . . If you are going to accept this will, please sign the acceptance—Isaacs, please." His partner moved toward her, offering her his fountain pen, indicating the place of signature. "If you wish to cause us trouble and annoyance, take the advice of the bigamist who has deliberately deceived you." McGinnis could not make his usual gesture, for his hands were engaged: his face, however, was expressive.

"What would you *do*?" she shrilled in falsetto, fluttering in earnest this time.

"He will be arrested and undoubtedly sentenced, and the world will know how you have been victimized," put in the King's Counsel, interposing bluffly.

"Tut, tut, Suh Jameson," muttered Judge Cheyney. "An honored name? Nonsense, suh. Now if the will were unfair to you, dear lady . . . But you keep youah house here, youah Newport villa, youah chateau at Cannes. Whereas, if you broke the will and secured youah dower, youah income would not permit such extravagances. This man Lazard wished the will broken so that he could lay his hands on ready money . . ."

Again McGinnis quieted the unruly

official at the other end of the wire—or seemed to do so. In face of both arguments, and despite the warnings of her counsel, she seized Isaacs's pen. "There," she said petulantly. And signed.

She could never be persuaded thereafter that Lazard was not in some way responsible for her future misfortunes. One by one, as the years passed and Lang's instructions were obeyed, she saw her houses go: first the Newport villa, then the Madison Avenue mansion, until she had only the Cannes chateau where, like her husband, she went to die. However, she lived longer than if she had had the entire income to lavish upon other young men, or her dower right to squander upon Lucullan luxury. By reducing her to fifty thousand a year the executors added an extra decade, which gave the good priests of Cannes the opportunity to frighten her into fear of a future state; causing the fatuous old sinner to imagine that at so advanced an hour she might cheat the devil of his due; and, once convinced that further dissipation would speedily end her days, she put in a belated bid for the least purchasable of all things—with the encouragement of the holy fathers. Sir Jameson Cholmondeley, believing in the efficacy of such repentances, overruled the *savant* executors, and at any rate the Rest House of St. Mary Sulpicia profited: a certain number of penniless people may always find bed and board there, thanks to her donation. Even she could not die without the world having benefited somewhat.

XIV

LAZARD left the house before an investigation of his luggage could be made. It was not until he again examined that luggage minutely, in the comparative safety of a steamer headed for a Latin-American city where he would be non-extraditable, that he discovered that in his valet, Wilkins, he had had the services of a brother craftsman; who, perverting the golden rule in his case as Lazard had done in the case of

Lang, had removed many of the more important exhibits in the collection of stickpins, cuff links, jeweled waistcoat buttons and other *bijouterie* that Mrs. Lang had given the object of her admiration. So that all Lazard had to show for his residence in the Lang house was now worth but a few thousands. Thus, a few weeks later, a pitiful letter reached the Lang executors through Lazard's lawyers, and its contemptuous answer allowed him to return to a country where his gift of language might again earn him a livelihood. A bitter experience at the hands of the customs officials awaited him. Not having been abroad before, he had shown the remainder of the Lang jewelry to a female passenger he was endeavoring to impress, and, some of the cabin stewards being, as usual, customs spies, Lazard was disagreeably surprised on landing by a request for its history. Not daring to give a real one, he must sell some gems to pay the duty: was thus mulcted of a large portion of all he had saved from the wreck of his high hopes.

A little later, as the news of his return spread along Broadway, Lily Lamotte's husband called upon him, administered a severe thrashing and a warning that, if he heard of any further reminiscences involving Lily's name, he would call again with a revolver. This man had known Lily when she was Lazard's appanage, had been deceived by her for him; but, despite this, had hurried to her at the first announcement of the second marriage of Mrs. Lang; having been as unable to conquer his passion as the average drunkard. Being a moody and morose person, with a superb chest development and a hard hitting record, he was quite able to gain for his wife the respect in which a man wishes his wife to be held. So that Lily Lamotte, nowadays, moves in one of the best *bourgeois* circles, and seems one of the most typical of her many female acquaintances therein. Lazard always looks the other way if by any chance they meet in public places.

He was even more of a hero to the new court he gathered about him than to the old; for, the true facts of the Lang

catastrophe never even reaching the servants, he was free to interpret his ejection in his own way, and was pointed out as the man who, having won a fortune, deliberately abandoned it because his nature turned in disgust against rendering affection to a dyed and painted old woman. "I thought I could do it, but it would have been easier to make the Statue of Liberty do a turkey trot," he has said many thousand times. Which tale of temperament, added to the "fame" with which his supposed marriage had covered him, won him the affections of another Lily. On Broadway when nasty notorieties pack the theaters and capable histrions in craftsman-like plays can draw only average audiences, it does not matter how one becomes "famous" so long as it is accomplished.

Curiously enough, Lily the Second is evening the score for Lily the First and for all the others. Lazard, after winning her by indifference, has become violently infatuated, thus cooling her ardor; and is now retained only because he works harder in her service than would a press agent on a salary; so that for her vaudeville engagements the remuneration has been raised. Now, indeed, is there truth in his former statement that he receives only "half an orange in the morning and a sack of tobacco a week"; and some day, when her heart is touched anew, he will find himself in the position in which he has placed so many other men. Then abandonment, and, as his formula for wit has become general along the Nightless Lane, and his girth and chins have increased during the years he has served the second Lily, she will have no successor; unless he should happen to find a fortune on the Broadway sidewalk—which, to say the least, is unlikely—and is willing to augment with it his failing fascinations. His future prospects are not such as to encourage any to follow in his path.

Not the least of his annoyances is the frequency with which the names of Toya Thiodolf and Robert Cameron MacThyndall figure in theatrical announcements, publishers' lists and other forms of enviable publicity.

A DODGE OF DEATH

By Russell Thorndike

“THE Outlaw has triumphed again. He has sowed another city with salt, and swept up her wealth for his army.”

The news spread terror through the city of Grizzlestein.

“Ours is the next city on his line of march. Ours is the next.” The Mayor hastily summoned his confederates to the council hall.

“Gentlemen,” he said, addressing the eight aldermen, “we are an independent city, and in the present crisis we cannot look for any succor from the powers of Europe. We have no standing army. The few men who could fight seem to have lost all heart since our Prince played the traitor and left us in the lurch. His cowardice, as you know, has demoralized the Guard, and the one cry of the city seems to be that we should sue for peace and escape with our lives. I very much doubt whether we shall even succeed in doing that, for the Outlaw is a bloody-minded scoundrel, and has shown no quarter up to the present. However, we must do the best we can, which is very little short of suicide.” And the fat little Mayor sighed, for he had been very happy as a mayor.

All that day terrified villagers hastened into the town for safety and spread the panic. They told of the mighty army that was but a few hours' march away, and they spoke of the rumored blood path that was left behind them, and rehearsed the horrors that would soon be theirs. And with one voice the population cursed the Prince, for although he had ruled them during the days of peace with a wise and tactful hand, yet as soon as he perceived his city to be in the conqueror's

march, he had turned and fled, God knew whither.

That afternoon the advancing army surrounded the town, and the conquering Outlaw chose for himself as headquarters the church of the village of Hanech. This village was on high ground, and from the tower of the church the conqueror could get a bird's-eye view of Grizzlestein, and make his plans accordingly. Toward sunset, amidst the chanting of the priests and nuns, the little Mayor walked forth, followed by his faithful, frightened aldermen. The Lady Abbess, who was of royal blood, being the only sister of the cowardly Prince, stood at the city gate and blessed them as they went. The Outlaw was watching from the tower. He and his staff were enjoying the joke immensely. The Mayor and aldermen arrived. (How ridiculous they did look in their sackcloth robes, with their chains of office in their hands! The Mayor himself was holding the key of the city gate.)

They were ushered into the crypt of the church and locked in. There they waited, fearing the worst, for their reception was not encouraging. All that evening there was the greatest consternation in Grizzlestein, for the suppliants did not return. The priests accordingly chanted in the monastery, the nuns prayed in the convent and the people blasphemed in the streets. What had happened to the Mayor and aldermen? Nobody knew. The men gathered in knots on the town wall and looked across at the mysterious tower of Hanech. Night set in, and campfires were lighted by the invaders, and a great brazier was lighted upon the tower of Hanech

church. The night was so still that the crackle of these fires could be heard from the town wall.

At about ten o'clock the faint boom of the tenor bell was heard from the tower. This was followed by another, and another, until all eight bells had sent across the valley one single feeble toll. What was the meaning of that? Why did they toll each bell? Was it for some purpose? Perhaps it was some drunken soldier's idea of fun. This was the conversation of the men upon the Grizzlestein wall. And then they saw soldiers moving on the tower, and the sound of sawing came to them; the soldiers were sawing the flagpost down. It was down. And now they were thrusting it through the battlements and making it fast with ropes. And then, in the light of the burning brazier, the terrified townsmen read the answer to their supplications for peace. For the Mayor was hanged from the flagpost—hanged in sight of the town. A dozen soldiers held torches in case the flickering brazier did not give sufficient light. There was no mistaking it—the Mayor was swinging from the flagpost, swinging from the tower of Hanech, and it meant no quarter in the morning to the town. And where were the aldermen—the eight aldermen? Had not the eight bells tolled? One bell for each man—and hasn't every bell a rope to pull it by? Very well, then—it's all quite simple—eight bells for eight aldermen, and the flagpole for the Mayor. The aldermen were accounted for—they were all in the belfry, hanging in a very neat circle in the center of the room. The conqueror enjoyed the joke as much as his boisterous soldiers, but no more than the townspeople shuddered at it.

When the novelty of the Mayor's situation had somewhat worn off, the soldiers left the top of the tower to sleep in the church below, or in the shelter of the tombstones. Pickets were placed, but they would not be troubled, for Grizzlestein men were not soldiers; they were just frightened sheep, and they were waiting for the slaughter men upon the morrow.

The Outlaw himself sat at a table in

the belfry. On the table he had spread out his battle plans for the morrow, and around him hung that grisly circle of aldermen from the bellropes. But he was not the sort of man to be frightened by dead men; he had seen corpses enough in his days, and had made them, too—made them with his sword, his dagger, his bare hands, and even with his brains, for he could devise most original tortures, could this conquering robber. So there he sat, and there they hung, and little did they trouble him. And outside the window hung the Mayor, motionless, perfectly motionless, for the night was so very still that nothing dead could possibly be stirred by the wind; and the pale moonlight, shining straight into the arched belfry window, silhouetted the dangling body on the belfry floor. So there he sat with the eight *bona fide* corpses and the shadow of another in the very room in which he worried out his battle plans, having given orders that no man was to be admitted to the tower.

About midnight he was sorely irritated, for, not content with his very decisive reply to the town's supplication for peace, out had come the Lady Abbess to plead for the city's safety. True, he had granted her an audience, for he had heard that some of these nuns were devilish fine-looking women, women who had taken the veil through disappointment of the very thing they had now sworn to avoid. But in this case the Outlaw was doomed to disappointment. Her beauty was not of this world—it made him feel uneasy, and he just sat silent while she pleaded for her people's lives. She offered him all the wealth of the convent—the jewels even from the sacred hangings in the chapel—the plate—the books—aye, everything of value he could have—but let him keep his men in check, and not defile the women, for the townsmen were very few and weak, and they would offer no resistance—they would only curse the memory of the Prince, her brother, who had turned coward and left them.

Now the very daring of the woman, and the fact that he was almost afraid of her, irritated the Outlaw still more,

so he summoned an officer and delivered the Abbess into his hands.

"Take this woman down into the church; give her to my soldiers, a generous present from their chief, for I can find no use for her—perhaps they can."

A few minutes later a derisive shout of laughter came from the church below, followed by the agonized scream of a woman.

"So," thought the Outlaw, "she's a woman after all; there's something that will make her scream." And he laughed and went on with his plans.

Then the shadow of the Mayor upon the floor began to move. His irritation returned; it was ridiculous; he was giving way to fancies, absurd fancies. There was not one breath of air stirring without—the body couldn't have moved! But it had, for it moved again—it moved with a convulsive twitch! Could it be an owl or a bat that had flapped against it and caused it to swing? He got up from his work, dividing the curtain of dead aldermen, and strode to the window. He was not frightened—Good Lord, no! But he didn't like things that he couldn't understand; that was why he had delivered the woman to his soldiers; he couldn't understand her, otherwise he might have kept her for himself. He now rather wished he had.

He looked out of the window. The body was hanging perfectly still. A bat was clinging to his hair; it moved downward, and finally tucked itself away behind the dead man's ear. Then a great wet moth crept from the corpse's open mouth and flew into the belfry, striking against the Outlaw's face, and then, attracted by the light upon the table, flew in large circles in and out among the hanging aldermen. Indeed, the night seemed now alive with moths. The Outlaw hadn't noticed them before; two large ones lay singed and twitching on his battle plan; and then a bat dropped from the belfry roof and crawled upon the table, frightened at the light. The Outlaw brushed them from his map, and set to work again—but once more the silhouetted body on the floor began to move. The Outlaw took his heavy cloak and hung it over the window, blocking

out a great portion of the moonlight from the floor. He then got to work in earnest; he forgot the woman's muffled shrieks and moans in the church below; he paid no heed to the careering circus of insects chased by the bats and banging past the bodies; he was absorbed in his work, his mighty battle plan.

He had sacked a score of cities in his time, but Grizzlestein appealed to him tremendously. It would be highly entertaining to unlock the gates of the city and just walk in and butcher all the people. Still, it was not his way to be too sanguine. Desperation, he well knew, will often make weak cowards put up a brave and soldierly fight, so it was as well to draw up plans in case of accidents. And so, with his mind he worked, and with his subconscious mind he listened to the distant laughter of his men and the moaning of the Abbess he had given them. Then his subconscious mind began to hear another thing—a noise of a swinging rope, and grating of the flagpost in the bell room overhead. There was no sound of a wind! The rushlight on the table burned quite steadily, although the belfry had two great arched windows open to the night. The grating noise continued. Mechanically he stopped his work. It sounded as if the body outside was swinging! Yes! It certainly sounded like it, and looked like it, too, for although the cloak of the Outlaw hid the body of the Mayor from the moonlight patch upon the floor—the rope was still visible—and the rope was moving backward and forward with a tremendous rhythmic swing.

With an oath the Outlaw leaped to his feet, and at the same instant a black shadow struck the cloak in the window. Simultaneously, with the noise of a snapping rope, the cloak was torn from the nails and folded itself round the shape that had shot in through the window. The Outlaw looked out—the rope was still hanging, but it was empty—the body of the Mayor was in the room! He tried to call out, but he couldn't; he seemed to have lost his voice. He was petrified with terror.

Think of it! The great soldier was

terrified. The figure in the cloak rose from the floor; the Outlaw's sword was leaning against the wall; the figure took this, and dropped it through the window; it fell into the churchyard on the grass; it made no noise. Then the figure shot the bolts of the tower door; it removed the cloak from its head, and came through the circle of dead aldermen. The Outlaw stepped back till the table was between them, and looked with horror at the awful face that confronted him. He would not have believed that hanging could have made a face so entirely abominable. The head was puffed and swollen, and the neck so thin and feeble that it seemed unable to bear its weight, for the flabby face lolled about from side to side, as if twitched back and forward by some strong vibrating nerve. He could see no resemblance to the Mayor he had hanged at sunset, but perhaps that was because the nose was half eaten away. The creature indicated the hanging bodies, and said in a voice that began low, but cracked into a treble continuously: "So you have hanged my poor aldermen!"

The Outlaw's voice returned. He despised fools, and this little Mayor, though excessively horrible to look upon, was a fool.

"You know that I did. You saw it done."

"You are laboring under a slight delusion," replied the creature. "You are taking me for someone else."

"I am doing nothing of the kind. You are the Mayor of Grizzlestein; you were unskillfully hanged; you have got off your rope, and you are going to be put back on it."

"The Mayor of Grizzlestein lies at the present moment broken and bespattered upon a tombstone in the churchyard below; the rope snapped as it swung and down he went, my poor old Mayor." And the creature gave a curious sigh. "You had ordered that no man should disturb you, so I secreted myself on the roof and climbed down the rope."

"But you are the Mayor," retorted the Outlaw; "you must be the Mayor of Grizzlestein."

"I am not," replied the creature.

"Then who in hell's name are you?" cursed the Outlaw.

"I am a diplomat," squeaked the creature.

"You are a filthy madman, half alive, without a brain," ejaculated the Outlaw.

"I am the Prince of Grizzlestein," replied the figure.

"The Prince of Grizzlestein!" cried the Outlaw.

"Yes," said the figure.

"And what do you want with me?" asked the Outlaw.

"I want to play a game of catch with you, a game of cats and mice. Go on! Run round!" And slowly round the table the little swollen-headed, pock-marked creature began to walk, and the Outlaw walked, too, keeping the table between them.

"Yes, I am the Prince of Grizzlestein," he continued as he walked, "not such a coward as I am made out. I am a far-seeing diplomat. I knew that my city was helpless to fight against you, and so I went away to Baden-Baden. Do you know why I went to Baden-Baden? Come, answer me." All this as they walked round the table. "Why do you think I went to Baden-Baden?"

"I don't know," faltered the Outlaw, as he walked. "Why did you go to Baden-Baden?"

"I'll tell you why I went to Baden-Baden," he said, walking faster and faster. "But you are quite sure you want to know why I went to Baden-Baden?"

"Yes," said the Outlaw, getting out of breath with walking. "Why did you?" For they were now going at a good pace, though not running—no, they were not running. "Why did you go? I want to know why you went to Baden-Baden."

"Then walk a little faster, or I shall be treading on your heels, and you wouldn't like that, would you?" And the pace increased so much that they almost ran, but the creature continued to talk in that horrible piping, breaking voice. "I know that your army would be useless without you; you are the great general—is it not so, eh? You command; your men are just machines,

beasts without brains, egged on by you with hope of spoil and rapine; so, knowing that I could not think to stop your army, I began to think of stopping you, and that is why I went to Baden-Baden. You know now, don't you?" the little man was almost shrieking, for by this time they were running.

"I don't know!" shouted the Outlaw. "I don't see why you went to Baden-Baden."

Suddenly the little man stopped; the Outlaw, who was prepared for a feint of that kind, stopped, too; the table was still between them. The little man stretched across it and picked up the rushlight. A moth flew from the light and settled on his face; its wings began to beat; it clung to the horrible face, and walked up toward the piece of flesh that was the remnants of a nose; it beat with its wings in the air once more, then slithered from the man's face and fell with a fluttered thud onto the table—it was dead. The Outlaw gasped. The creature laughed.

"The moth is dead. You know now why I went to Baden-Baden. Look at my face." And he held the naked flame against his face, and there came to the nostrils of the Outlaw a loathsome smell of singeing.

"My God!" gasped the Outlaw. "What hell's traffic is there in Baden-Baden?"

"The plague!" shrieked the Prince. "The eating plague! It's eaten the flesh of a million men—it strikes down the weak; it strikes down the strong; it is death, and I am death, and I am going to catch you and kiss you." And hurling the light in the other's face, and upsetting the table, he leapt straight at the Outlaw.

The Outlaw dodged behind one of the bodies of the aldermen, swinging it with such force that it pushed the Prince off his feet, but he was up again and running in and out among the bodies of the men; and as he dodged the Outlaw kept swinging the bodies back to check the advance of the little death man that was after him. Round they went—round

and round—playing a game of death's catch, and the faster they went, the faster they swung the bodies. Sometimes the little Prince would swing himself right round the room on the shoulders of a corpse, then let himself go in the direction of the terrified Outlaw. He shrieked for help, and begged for mercy as he dodged, but the little thing had no mercy. Soldiers were already pounding on the door, but the bolts were strong, and their cries were drowned in the shrieks of the two men as they played their grim game of catch and dodge, round and round and in and out, and the aldermen swung and jolted on their ropes, and the bells rang and jangled overhead, and the bats flew round, and a screech-owl shrieked, and still the Outlaw dodged and ducked and swung the bodies at the awful thing that never gave up the game. It was mad hell in the belfry of Hanech.

And then an awful thing happened. The moon went out. It was entirely dark. The game stopped. The Outlaw was afraid to move, for fear of betraying his whereabouts to Death. But Death knew instinctively—but he didn't move for a long, long time—he was torturing the Outlaw. And then the game changed. The Outlaw began creeping toward the door, but it wasn't the longing to get free that made him go—it was the longing to find that thing in the dark, and beat it to a pulp, even though it meant death to do it. So the deathly thing waited by the door, and drawn by the unseen hands of some hideous and fascinating influence, the Outlaw came toward it.

When the soldiers finally broke down the door, they found the Outlaw lying dead, and over him was crooning a shape of flesh which bore small resemblance to a man. And from the hole where once a mouth had been, there came a stream of glutinous saliva. Then a soldier ran his sword through the thing.

The soldier flung his sword to the ground and spat, and just then the dawn broke over the city of Grizzlestein.

OLD POETS

By Joyce Kilmer

IF I should live in a forest
And sleep underneath a tree,
No grove of whispering saplings
Would make a home for me.

I'd go where the old oaks gather,
Serene and good and strong,
And they would not sigh and tremble
And vex me with a song.

The pleasantest sort of poet
Is the poet who's old and wise,
With an old white beard, and wrinkles
About his kind old eyes.

For these young fibbertigibbets
A-rhyming their hours away,
They won't be still like honest men
And listen to what you say.

The young poet screams forever
About his sex and his soul,
But the old man listens and smokes his pipe
And polishes its bowl.

There should be a club for poets
Who have come to seventy year.
They should sit in a great hall, drinking
Red wine and golden beer.

They would shuffle in of an evening,
Each one to his cushioned seat,
And there would be mellow talking
And silence rich and sweet.

There is no peace to be taken
With poets who are young,
For they worry about the wars to be fought
And the songs that must be sung.

But the old man knows that he's in his chair
And that God's on His throne in the sky.
So he sits by the fire in comfort
And he lets the world spin by.

HIS OWN PEOPLE

By Albert Kinross

THE Admiral had told his story; he was slightly deaf and made us shout a little, which gave him most of the conversation, for, rather than shout, we would listen, and I don't think it did us very much harm. Quite the contrary, judged by this evening. Mrs. Armitage, our hostess, so obviously enjoyed giving him his chance that she was radiant, and Susan Bligh had all a girl's appreciation of "a delightful old boy." She called him that in her accustomed summary and review, going over the dear man's points, his modesty, his seaman's deference to youth and beauty (though that was hardly how she phrased the thing), and the graceful way he had steered clear of irksome repetitions. He had taken the lion's share, but he had not been dull. "A regular old sealion," she had capped it, appraising the evening's doings at their proper worth. I saw her home, I remember; I always used to see Susan home.

The Admiral had just told us how he had saved the life of a Persian minister by taking the fellow on board his ship, and how the broken statesman, being the right kind of villain, was ultimately recalled from exile and put back in his old position. The Admiral met him some years afterward, and, instead of recognizing an obligation, the Persian scowled and there were shots that spoiled a brand new hat. Our friend had found himself abhorred and in some danger. A second Persian cleared up the mystery. "A great minister," he explained, "does not wish to owe his life to any man." It was all very well for common people, so it seemed, but the great ones must be enthroned with-

out a cloud. The Admiral was an offense and best removed.

We had laughed about it, and Mrs. Armitage, turning to Kinglake, had asked him whether he had ever saved the life of a fellow creature. And this time she desired a grateful patient, one who would not send an assassin after you to wipe out the humiliation of the debt.

Kinglake had smiled, or, rather, the scar on his upper lip had gone sideways—a Chinaman gave him the wound in Newchwang when he was on the way to join Kuroki's army. He had seen some killing, but very little saving, he declared.

"But you," said Susan Bligh, "haven't *you* ever saved anybody? Isn't there anybody who'll speak up for you when—"

"Yes, on the Judgment Day," cried Mrs. Armitage.

The Admiral gave up trying to listen. He was quite content; he had had his share and a bit over. He sat there gallantly, encouraging his young friends. Perhaps his smile was the pleasantest feature of him. Kinglake's scar rather spoiled his mouth, though the eyes were not unkindly.

"You want me to tell you about my man?" he asked. "I don't know whether he'll speak up for me or whether he'll remember or anything. An animal in pain remembers the vet, I suppose. It began when I was in Russia, in 1905 or thereabouts, during that muddle of a revolution."

Kinglake's eyes strayed round the cosy drawing room, recalling another scene, another time, another place—a place totally and utterly different from

this one by all seeming. The operation required some moments.

"Mayfair—Siedlce," he said at last. "The contrast!"

"What's the matter with Siedlce?" asked Susan Bligh. She pronounced it Syedletz, which seemed about right.

"Everything," said Kinglake, "if you're used to this. There isn't a house like this in all Siedlce, nor near it, nor about it. There's the Castle and a good Town Hall—the Governor rules from the one and the other's municipal offices; but the houses—fleas and dirt and wretchedness, and Allejnaia the one street where you might live. My friends the Marlinskis live in Allejnaia, and I had run over from Warsaw to spend a few days with them. They hate the place, but he's a powerful bureaucrat, like one of our chaps in India, and has to go where he's told. We sat indoors most of the time and I listened to his complaints. There was nothing else to do. In Warsaw, or, say, Monte Carlo, Marlinski is quite a pleasant companion, but here he was a fish out of water, and actually had to help govern these people. There are about twenty-five thousand people in Siedlce and more than a third of them are Jews; not the prosperous, cocknified Hebrews you see over here, but real Jewish Jews. Imagine the Marlinskis and about ten thousand Jews! They hated them. Everybody hates them in Russia and they hate back. There is no serious explanation, except that dogs hate cats—a different nervous system. Unfortunately for the Jews, they are in a minority and get massacred. If they were the majority and the Christians the minority, I should say that the massacres would be the other way about. Oh, yes, there'd be massacres. They've always been the favorite religious argument, up to 1700 A.D. or so, anyhow—and Russia's 1600 at the most.

"It was winter, so we took sledge drives, and there were Marlinski's endless complaints and lots of cigarettes and rather too much to eat and drink. Once or twice I put on goloshes and went out by myself. Marlinski wouldn't walk in those streets, and as for Madame,

she said the smell of them was enough. Russian women speak their minds on such matters.

"On the Monday, so it happened, there was a massacre. From a professional or special correspondent's point of view, I was in luck. Marlinski apologized; I went out and watched 'em. War's all right, but this was a dirty business—killing and stealing; first killing, then stealing. The old Jews went down like sheep; the young ones fought and fought well; of the women and children it is best to say as little as possible. Once or twice I laughed. Stealing's a comic business in the main, little different from the clown and pantaloons part of a harlequinade. The word 'pillage' sounds dreadful, but usually it's a timid amateur staggering under a load too big for him. Such thieves are greedy beggars, and the old instincts make them afraid. They break into a run or throw their loot away at the least rumor. Once or twice at Siedlce I had to laugh. . . . I was a special correspondent and the revolution was over, but here was something for you people who read newspapers instead of writing for them. I did a rather livid column about that massacre and there were meetings of protest throughout Jewry; yes, even here in London, down the Mile End Road, though I don't suppose you troubled much about it."

Mrs. Armitage did remember vaguely something of the kind.

"And wasn't there a subscription for them?" asked Susan Bligh. "I think I saw a piece about it in the *Post*."

"When the massacre was about done," continued Kinglake, "my friend Marlinski and his friends must have bestirred themselves; for out came the soldiers, and, instead of turning their rifles on the dogs, they began with the cats. Many of the Jews had weapons in their hands, and, using this as an excuse, the soldiers opened fire. They are bad shots, but at close quarters—it's difficult to miss. In my street there were about twenty, and at the word of command they raised their rifles. I backed into a doorway and

watched them. One big chap commenced to blubber, threw his gun away and ran. He was so clumsy, so like a frightened and rather tender-hearted bullock, that I remembered him. He passed me, tumbled into a house—a Jewish house—and disappeared. 'His own people,' I thought. 'The poor beggar couldn't very well fire on them.'

"I heard about him later from Marlinski. My friend was indignant and quite roused himself. The fellow's name was Rabinovitch—David Rabinovitch; yes, a Jew wearing the Tsar's uniform, and, instead of shooting down his own people, he had deserted. Rather pitifully, it seemed to me. The man simply couldn't do it; he hadn't argued—he had just thrown his rifle away and run. Marlinski said that they had failed to catch him, but that they were sure of having him by the morning, and then—well, it would be all over with David. A deserter and a Jew—a firing party would make short work of him! Marlinski grew quite hot over it.

"I left Siedlce, thinking little further of the incident; life was cheap enough in Russia, and one more or less—but in Warsaw I came across the Zagoscins, and they told me that in the basement of their house lived a Jewish family, the same family that had the shop on the ground floor, and that these people possessed a hidden man, some fugitive, so it was rumored. They couldn't prove it. It was only servants' gossip. Nobody had seen him.

"I said good night to the Zagoscins at three one morning—in Russia one sits and smokes and talks endlessly—as here in London," said Kinglake, smiling through his scar. "Halfway down the street, under a lamp, I passed two men, both Jews. One was Rabinovitch in civilian clothes; the other must have been his friend of the shop and basement. It was easy enough to recognize the chap, with his big, pathetic face, full of dumb, unquestioning obedience; the perfect Continental soldier—unless, as it had happened, his heart was touched. He would have been excellent material to put up against somebody else; but his own people—his courage had oozed

away at that. The other Jew was keener and sharper, and it was no doubt his doing that Rabinovitch was in hiding and would ultimately get away.

"Next time I called on the Zagoscins I first went to the Jewish shop on the ground floor. A woman was in charge and she had no other customer.

"I bought some sweets for the Zagoskin children, using execrable Russian—they often speak to you about other things if they see that you are a foreigner. This woman wouldn't speak.

"'You have a guest here—from Siedlce,' said I.

"She looked me over, quite calmly, quite unembarrassed, and then very politely told me that I was mistaken.

"I put a ten-rouble piece on the counter. 'This may help him a very little,' I said.

"The Jewess played the part admirably. Not at all could she understand me. There was no guest from Siedlce; perhaps, at another house . . .

"I moved away, leaving the money on the counter. She did not return it.

"'Are you a Jew?' she asked, as I stood in the doorway.

"'Angleechanin—an Englishman,' I answered.

"She let me go without another word.

"By some curious decree of Providence—certainly providential for him—this fellow Rabinovitch seems to have pursued me. Ten days later I was looking over the papers in the reading room of the Four Seasons, at Hamburg, when the name 'David Rabinowitz' stood out in one of them. A new immigration law—Aliens' Act was its official title—had come into force during my absence, and among the first aliens to be rejected was this same Rabinovitch who had flung away his rifle at Siedlce and fled, choking, to the nearest hiding place. His Warsaw friends must have smuggled him over the frontier and given him a ticket to London. He had, said the paper, been two pounds short of the landing money. He had told his story, which I, for one, could vouch for. The immigration board had decided against him. He had neither cash nor friends to take

charge of him, and back he had been shipped to Bremen, the port of embarkation, and, beyond a doubt, the German authorities would receive him likewise, passing him on to the Russian frontier, where he would be taken into custody and shot for the deserter that, indeed, he was.

"Bremen is only a couple of hours' railway journey from Hamburg. A few pounds would save a fellow's life. It occurred to me that I had better save it—the price of a luncheon party at a decent restaurant or a trifle you buy at a jeweler's. Another paper gave further details. Efforts were being made—rather late in the day, I thought—to have Rabinovitch brought back to London. A 'political refugee' was what they called him, and the law admitted political refugees, landing money or none at all. There was quite a discussion about it, though where the 'politics' came in was not quite clear. Meanwhile, the hero of this episode was on board a steamer and probably too seasick and too heartsick to trouble either way. I resolved to go to Bremen.

"Rabinovitch must have had a rough crossing—luckily for him. Three days and three nights on the North Sea—and the North Sea can do a thing when put to it! I've lain in an upper bunk with my feet on the ceiling like a fly to keep me from pitching out. Lord knows what happened to Rabinovitch! But he got the three days' respite, which gave me a chance. My paper could use the story if they wanted to. It would be rather a good one, especially if, as seemed likely, the Home Secretary took up the case.

"Next day in Bremen I saw more English papers, and one or two were growing quite excited over Rabinovitch. The story of how he had refused to fire on his own people had got abroad, with trimmings. One reporter, probably of the same romantic persuasion, had actually interviewed the heroic youth. He was described orientally as a great strapping fellow, capable of slaying his tens of Japanese, but nobly reluctant when ordered to fire upon his own. In reality, of course, Rabinovitch was a

clumsy, tender-hearted lout, and not at all heroic.

"His boat was abominably overdue, and Bremen, fairly amusing if you happen to be a tourist with a thirst for Gothic architecture, uncommon dull. It's a very Protestant city, like Basel or Boston or Edinburgh, and, like all very Protestant cities, rather frigid if you have no friends. People won't look at you without three acres of introductions and a family council to decide whether you're a fit and proper person to be asked indoors. Then they'll give you all they've got.

"I sent my card in to the British consul, a good German burgher who enjoyed having the title. He took me to a cellar and ordered a bottle of wine, but wasn't at all interested in Rabinovitch. He was far too plump and comfortable an old gentleman to trouble about such trifles. Being a widower and somewhat homeless and forsaken, I think he was glad of the hour's distraction. I also alarmed a Mr. Bornholm, who represents an English paper mill, the proprietor being a particular friend of mine; and Mr. Bornholm held a family council, so that next day I was asked to dinner.

"The boat came in next day. The shipping people had promised to telephone to my hotel, and after lunch I was down at the harbor waiting for Rabinovitch. I may forget his gratitude, but I shall never forget the waiting. To begin with, it rained all the time, not a moment's break in that gray downpour. Ships are uncertain things, so I waited several hours; and harbors are exposed and open to the sky—bleak as a moor, open as the desert or the sea. I was wet through. One or two men who had business there were kind to me, and I had drinks with them at a waterside tavern, a roughish place used by sailor chaps who spoke a Frisian dialect. But mostly I waited in the rain. When the boat showed dismally out of the mist I was standing on the quay with a clerk from the shipping company and a partially sober individual who sported an official cap. We chatted till the vessel came alongside.

"There was no mistaking Rabinovitch. Solitary, foredoomed, weakened by seasickness, packed into a rough civilian overcoat, he was on deck, the only passenger, and no one seemed to love him. Rather was David looked at in the light of a confounded nuisance who had given a lot of trouble to persons in authority. The captain hated the sight of him; the officers, and even the lowest seamen, had no use for him.

"Imagine the chap," continued Kinglake with a gesture, "hidden away at Siedlce, put into civilian clothes and smuggled out by night, dumped down in Warsaw, hidden again there, then secretly over the frontier, smothering under a load of hay and just the chance of a watchman skewering him with a bayonet; from the frontier by train to Bremen, through a strange, civilized country, traveling with other emigrants like cattle; a day or two's loafing at Bremen, the medical examination—all a complete mystery to Rabinovitch; then thirty-six hours at sea, an element never previously encountered, met or known, in a crazy little tub of a steamboat, six hundred tons at most, battered down and sick with twenty like himself; then a smooth morning, the strange coasts and stranger creeping up the Thames; and now, abruptly, for no reason that he can conceive or fathom, refused a landing! . . . What did it all mean, he must have asked in his dim oxlike way, then given it up—a riddle too deep for him. . . . Winter and fog, three days on board in dock, the Tower Bridge and the Tower and those dismal wharves, the lights of London dull upon the sky, and he, disliked, superfluous, his keep grudged him—so much for England! And then the Thames again and the North Sea; into the teeth of the storm, filled with a great sickness, under hatches, living like an animal in a cage, the seas beating over this strange vessel, mysteriously propelled, mysteriously manned, commanded. I know those nights, the screw racing, the wind gone mad—he, holding on to something that will keep him firm; and so to Bremerhaven. . . . Lord, if the fellow could only have written it down—I would have bought a copy!"

"You're rather rubbing it in," said Susan Bligh.

"Well, I want to," replied Kinglake; "we comfortable people never quite realize things unless they are rubbed in."

"Please go on," said Mrs. Armitage; "Rabinovitch has arrived."

Kinglake resumed: "Like myself, he was wet through, though this didn't seem to worry him. He was quite inert, quite apathetic, and, I believe, perfectly ready to go on to the frontier and stand before the rifles of his executioners. 'I can't be worse off than I am,' was written all over him: a heavy, much enduring lout of a fellow, now resigned and empty of consolation, was poor David.

"*Eto chorascho*—it's all right, David; you won't get sent back to Russia," said I from the landing stage.

"At this he looked up, for the first time since his arrival, uncovered his head, and—believed me!

"Why he believed me I don't know, but he obviously did, and when the partially sober individual who sported an official cap came to take charge of him, he turned to me as if to say, 'Shall I?' The spy young clerk had meanwhile exchanged a few words with the captain and disappeared.

"The official personage in a cap now stirred up Rabinovitch and marched him off as a bullock is marched to market. He was, as I have already hinted, a trifle fuddled, and, very probably, at the best of times a highly imbecile old gentleman. Hitherto he and I, as we stood there chatting in the rain, had been excellent friends, but now, suddenly, he had become quite hostile. When I explained for the third and last time that I was there to befriend Rabinovitch, 'Go away,' he said; 'what do you want with the man? You're after his money—I know you'; and he tried his hardest to be rid of me.

"I retired from the contest, saw the futility of reasoning with the chap, but declined to be shaken off. Rabinovitch had some luggage, a cheap cardboard and canvas portmanteau, so he was led to the Custom House. The official and I waited for him. The official turned his back upon me, declined to acknowl-

edge my existence, but couldn't keep it up. 'He hasn't got any money!' he cried at last. I did not answer.

"Rabinovitch came out, and after that we made our way uninterruptedly to the shelter where the German had to deliver him pending tomorrow's inquiry. David looked at me; I smiled at him. 'Go on,' I said, 'it's all right'; and he was reassured.

"It was still raining; I was wet to the skin; so was David; so was the German. We were an assorted and curious gathering; but the greatest joke of all was the way this strange official insulted me all the way from the Custom House to the shelter. I had over a mile of it.

"Here was I, the accredited representative of a great London newspaper, sacrificing my time, health, comfort and private fortune in a mission of singular mercy; here was I, the son of a most excellent and respected father, a graduate of two good universities, a writer of some repute in both hemispheres, a member of first-chop clubs, the owner of a banker's reference and a good address: here was I, I repeat, a person hitherto treated with all the ensigns of civility, even of deference, the recipient of a dinner invitation from a good citizen of Bremen—and this German official of the twentieth or lowest grade called me a crimp to my face, heaped obloquy on my alleged mission and threatened me with personal violence, till, realizing the hopeless nature of his predicament, he suddenly collapsed, and explained that it was his sacred duty to deliver David to the shelter, and, if he failed, there would be awful trouble.

"He implored me to desist from my fell purpose; he almost wept, and, seeing me obdurate, took comfort in one oft-repeated sentiment. 'You wait,' he said; 'the shelter master will give you such a jolly good hiding!'

"Refreshed by this afterthought, he continued in silence, broken only by subdued references to the shelter master, evidently a large and brutal man. 'He'll get hold of you,' he muttered; 'he don't stand any nonsense; he can hit; he can hit a man dead!' . . . Put a fool into a uniform and time will make him a

triple, three-starred, extra special fool. Just ask the Admiral. . . .

"Rabinovitch had hardly said a word. Me he clearly regarded as his friend and the imbecile German as an official and unimportant microbe that we perforce tolerated. He didn't quite know why, but, as long as I was there, it was all right. Every now and then I encouraged him with a few sentences in Russian, which made the microbe still more desperate, while Rabinovitch nodded gratefully; and when we reached the shelter I told him that I would be with him in the morning and that he needn't be afraid. I took a note of the address, which for some official reason had been refused me, and, to the German's great disgust, went off before the herculean shelter master could give me the 'jolly good hiding' that had been so vividly anticipated.

"David, being safely bestowed until the next morning, I changed my clothes at the hotel, wrote and telephoned to the shipowners and dined with the Bremen gentleman and his wife at an ancient tavern that had once been warehouse and mansion of a Hanseatic merchant. It was pretty cheerful, and both of them were rather interested in the day's doings and in the Russian experiences from which I was freshly come.

"By noon next morning I had Rabinovitch safe and all to myself. I stood bail for him, so to speak, and the shipping company, quite humanly pleased and cheerfully assisting, was perfectly ready to let me have him. Business is business, and, in the ordinary course of events, he would have gone back to Russia by an early train. The shipowners were honestly glad to be relieved of this part of the affair.

"I found David at their office. What should I do with him? If I bought him a first class ticket he could get back to London unquestioned; so ran that idiotic law—and the difference between first and steerage was, perhaps, a sovereign! But what would he do there? Add another to the hungry mouths that already fill these overcrowded streets; he sweated till he, in his turn, could sweat? Endure even grosser torments

than those he had overcome? The company was that day sending a batch of emigrants to the Argentine. I put it to Rabinovitch. 'What about Buenos Ayres?' I asked. He had heard of the place, a favorite field of emigration for the Russian Jew. He had no clear idea where it was, knew nothing else about it, but he had no great hankering after England. He settled on Buenos Ayres. He had three pounds in his pocket, and a ticket to the Argentine cost six. I made him contribute one of his pounds and gave him his ticket. The shipping company would do the rest. Today he would leave—a free man.

"He grasped the idea. He had obeyed and followed me like a child. He had told me his story, simply, nakedly, as I had seen it happen. He did not pose as a hero. 'I could not fire on those people,' he said; 'I threw my rifle away and ran.' I did not tell him that I had seen him run, that I knew anything at all about his earlier experiences. Where was the good? I only told him that I was English, perhaps to balance his other experience of us. . . . I gave him my card. 'You might send me a letter and tell me how you are getting on,' I said. I don't think he could read, but he put the card carefully away in his pocket. . . . I held out my hand; he took it, fell to his knees, and would have kissed it many, many times. I suppose I was moved. One is moved when the great things of this world come home to one, death and life and motherhood and all of them.

"As I was packing my things at the hotel that evening the British consul turned up with a telegram from the consul-general in Hamburg. The Home Secretary had at last taken up the case and the consul had orders to bestir himself. I read the telegram. 'Too late,' I said. 'Rabinovitch is on his way to Buenos Ayres. The Home Office will see all about it in tomorrow morning's paper'; and we shook hands. . . . So, by an accident, I had saved a life and,

unlike the Persian rescued by our friend the Admiral, my chap was grateful."

We looked round for the Admiral at this. Quietly, discreetly, without disturbing anybody, he had gone from the room and was probably snug in bed at his quarters in Ebury Street. We knew the trick and had often chaffed him on it.

"And so," continued Kinglake, "if I ever knock at the gates of heaven and am asked 'What have you done?'—perhaps—perhaps Rabinovitch will speak up for me."

"Oh, I'm sure he will!" said Mrs. Armitage.

"Are you?" said Kinglake. "Then you believe in gratitude?"

"Of course—don't you?"

"In the gratitude of the giver; the other fellow's usually too busy to remember very long."

"And what's become of Rabinovitch—have you ever heard?"

"Not a line—not a syllable—not a whisper—nothing, nothing at all."

"And you called him grateful!" cried Susan Bligh.

"So he was, when gratitude was of any use."

"You're too deep for us!" laughed Mrs. Armitage.

"And what should you say he thinks of you? Does he know why you did it; does he account for you in any way?" asked Susan Bligh.

"I don't think so. He's probably given it up. When one is poor and miserable and frightened, the world is full of mysteries—I'm merely another. Probably he says prayers about them; I've done the same occasionally myself."

And Susan Bligh, in her accustomed summary and review, dismissing the Admiral, went on to Kinglake.

"I wonder why he shaves his upper lip, with that great scar? A mustache—" she began.

"Wouldn't hide it," I comforted her.

"Doesn't hair grow on a scar?" she asked.



ALL ELSE BUT LOVE

By Willard A. Wattles

(ANY WIFE TO ANY HUSBAND)

SOMETIMES, dear love, in thinking on the years,
The wrinkled years, stoop-backed and staggering,
That will come on to close our little spring
Of firm, strong-bodied youth, the dazing tears,
The empty dream, the fruitless tree, the dew,
Death damp, that cannot come amiss,
Sometimes I wonder will the night winds kiss
As tender then as when the day was new?
Red lips are warm with youth and shy desire,
Straining, love-hungry, in a wild caress;
Snow lips press coldly, calmly passionless
The breast of love, and in that kiss expire.
The springtime flees on golden feet, but when
Wan winter comes, will love be loyal then?

II

(ANY HUSBAND TO ANY WIFE)

Or youth or age, can such things come to men?
The morning star, the hush of dawn, the sun,
The blaze of noon, and evening; day is done;
Night dreams on dusky pillows—morn again.
The green blade springs; the stalk puts forth the ear;
'Tis gathered, threshed; snows settle, melt away;
A robin sings, and some sweet April day
Warm swells the soil and slender shoots appear.
Year after year the changeless seasons pass,
Star systems blossom, fade and sink from sight,
And still no bound is set 'twixt day and night;
Each spring the robins sing among the grass.
—Nor youth nor age; look up, faint heart, and smile;
All else but love, the shadow on the dial.

THE MERCHANT OF VENUS

By Albert Payson Terhune

RAEGAN had been absent from his home haunts for thirty days. Not for a month. For thirty days. In Raegan's world there is a vast difference of meaning in the two terms.

I was far too tactful to ask where he had been. Intuition—or observation—had told me he would be back in town on the thirtieth day. If not, on the sixtieth or at worst the ninetieth. Magistrates have a fondness for the number thirty and its exact multiples.

Raegan on his return was quite free from reserve or false shame as to his abiding place during the thirty-day hiatus in our acquaintance.

"Been to sea," he volunteered cheerily. "Surrounded by water, anyhow. And in as comf'table quarters as shipboard; without the risk of being drowned. Stopping a spell at the little riverside ranch claimed by old man Blackwell's heirs. There's worse places—if one doesn't have to be at any of 'em."

I still felt a certain awkwardness in pursuing the theme. But Raegan had none. He modestly but frankly went on to explain.

"The bulls," he observed, "have had it in for me for quite a spell. I see that, now it's too late to do me any good. They framed me. Elsewise, why did that mission-upholstered peg poster at Eighth and Fiftieth give me backtalk when I reparteed to his 'move-on' yawp? And then why did he try to shove me when he saw I wasn't feeling as peaceful as I generally do? He must have known I wasn't sober enough to be the reg'lar 'dumb, driven' New Yorker. I handed him one. And in the mix-up I tore both the skirts of his coat. (Always do that, son, when you scrap with a cop. They

have to pay, out of their own pockets, for repairs to their harnesses. So a torn coat pains 'em a whole lot worse'n a fractured heart.) I had pull enough to get the coop edict pared down to thirty days; and I squared myself with the sore bull. There's no harm done. But," he added in soft regret, "if I'd been a milittette I'd 'a' got my picture on the front page for messing up a cop—instead of two measly agate lines in the 'Police Court News.'"

I tried to cheer him with the unique reflection that Law, if not Life, deals more gently with women offenders than with men. But Raegan had no wish to be cheered. My well meant words tapped one of the theory veins that lie so close to his mental surface.

And from that punctured vein gushed forth a flood of contradictory argument. To whose depths, like sediment—mud or gold as you may prefer—silted at last the ensuing Raeganesque yarn; told, as usual, by way of illustration.

At least, Raegan seemed to think it illustrated one or more of his argument's various points. Whether or not it did I cannot say. For the points had come too fast and too turbulently for me to tabulate them. But it illustrated something. Of that I can have no doubt at all. Perhaps that honesty is the best policy. Perhaps that birds of a feather should not throw stones.

The good old Law (scoffed Raegan) gives women the best of it, hey? Maybe so, in such silly trifles as property rights and breach of promise and arson and mayhem and murder. But not in the really big things of life. Not once. Sometimes it even drives 'em to

matrimony. Or worse. Like Mattie Mercer.

It didn't drive Mattie Mercer to matrimony. For she'd driven there of her own accord. But it drove her out of it and then to worse. And, after that, to still worse. And, at last, to *very* worst.

Mattie was a friend of mine. At just one spot on the route. Not before or since. She's been miles above me, those earlier and later times. She was a fine woman. I'll hand her that, if it will help her carry her district. I've heard folks hint that her morals were bad. They weren't. Any more than a bald-headed man's hair is bad. She hadn't any. Morals. Not hair. She had a double portion of *that*. Red. And her eyes were red-brown and her skin was a winter sunset. And her stuck-out jaw was the only thing that saved her from being wrecked by that color combination. As it was, she just couldn't make her temperament behave.

I've read somewhere that a virtuous woman is a crown to her husband. Well, if that's so, Mattie's husband hadn't the ghost of a show of butting into the king row. He got wise, by and by, and he Renoed both Mattie and her temperament.

But she didn't have that south elevation jaw for nothing. She sat on the hilltop and made war medicine, till hubby emeritus loafed across with a big lump sum. He wanted her to drop the use of his last name, too—he having quite a fancy to the name and not relishing the decorations she was likely to plaster on it. Mattie agreed to mislay the name for another spot cash consideration. She grabbed the cash—and hung onto the name. She sure was a business man.

Then she figured how she could best lay out her capital and her name so as to support herself and to peeve Mercer and his scand'lized, high-ideaed family that had lost its taste for her.

She'd read "Mrs. Warren's Profession" and it gave her the double idea she wanted. I never read the poem or tract or treatise or whatever it is, myself. But when Mattie told me about her start and mentioned the Warren

person, I asked her who Mrs. Warren was. And she answered, kind of disgusted:

"A Merchant of Venus."

"By Shakespeare?" I asked her, to show I was hep to just a few of the major leaguers.

"No," comes back Mattie; "by Necessity."

Mattie started business. She had the cash. And her earlier flights had given her the nucleus of a good clientèle. She kept the name "Mercer," too. And it began to take on quite a new local reputation all of its own.

Friend Husband must have been pleased. But it served him nice and right. Men are too careless about who they lend the use of their names to. Any man of sense, looking at Mattie, from the time she was expelled from grammar school, would have hung out the "No Matrimony" sign in a hurry. And scuttled up a tree till she had moved past.

It didn't take Mattie long to make a fairly good beginning, and to stop being "Mattie" and become "Mrs. Mercer." Maybe you think there was a fortune in it. Most people do. They think the middlewoman's profits are enormous, and that the Mrs. Mercers usually stack up the coin in millions.

And the Mrs. Mercers ought to. They ought to have every pleasure and luxury that this life can give them. Because, if there's a good old John Calvin hell anywhere in the next world, the Mrs. Mercers are sure due to occupy its classiest grills. To my way of thinking, theirs comes pretty near to being the only unpardonable sin on the whole slate.

And when I say "unpardonable," I mean "inexcusable," too. There's nothing to make the Merchant of Venus profession forgivable. Not even the money that's in it. For there's more profit in a toy shop or a steam laundry.

It's just rotten. And fringed with trouble, at that. Like I'm going to prove to you, if you'll quit yawning and listen.

Still, as I pointed out, Mrs. Mercer hadn't a moral to her back. And she

had a spite to work off on her ex-family-in-law. And she grew to love the life. And there was a tolerable living in it for her. And it kept her from being lonesome. And it was nice to have folks to order around. So Mrs. Mercer was pretty happy. She had craved to lap up excitement. And she got it (like the house's liquor) by the wholesale. It was the life she was suited to. The longer it lasted the surer she was of that.

She came of a million times better class than most Rahabettes. And that helped. For she catered only to the "Double A" trade. She was clever, too; and always hitting on cute ways to advertise, among the clubmen who had known Hubby. As, for instance, when she hung her saintly, stiff-necked mother-in-law's Sargent portrait in the front reception room. Hubby heard about that. She saw to it that he should. He paid a private detective five hundred dollars to go and steal or destroy it. Mrs. Mercer tipped the sleuth an extra ten to sling acid on the picture when there was a club crowd in the house and a correspondent of *Social Bliitherings*; and to talk about it afterward.

Yes, Mrs. Mercer got along fine—for such a job. And she was happier'n ever before in her life. But maybe too much happiness ain't good for any woman. Perhaps that's why so few of 'em die of it. And perhaps that's why old man Trouble by and by frescoed the Indian sign on Mrs. Mercer's career of simple bliss. Here's how it happened:

Mrs. Mercer had a younger brother and sister. And they were the only folks in the world she cared anything about. But she sure worshiped those two. They had all three been orphans ever since the little sister had been born; and an undesired maiden aunt had brought them up. Mrs. Mercer had been years the oldest and she had married young.

After her smash-up with her husband and her experiment in Mercerizing vice, she had been canned good and plenty by Auntie. But she had managed to keep in touch with Brother and Little Sister, on the sly. She was generous with them and was always slipping them cash or

pretty presents. In view of which, they consented to take her at her own face value instead of at Auntie's.

Brother was getting ready for college. And Little Sister had been bedridden from the day she was born. Bad teamwork in the legs and spine, or something expensive like that.

Just as Mrs. Mercer is beginning to hit out a fair living and to realize she's struck her gait at last, good old Auntie forgets to wake up one morning. Auntie's eight-thousand-dollar annuity stops with Auntie's life. Nothing had been laid by. Brother and Little Sister were tossed into the snow-eating class.

It was up to Mrs. Mercer. And she never batted a lash, but took on the extra weight as cheerful as could be. She loved those two kids. As I was telling you.

Of course, she couldn't very well keep them at the house. So she hired a little apartment for them and furnished it. And she hired a trained nurse at a flat rate of \$1,560 a year to tend to Little Sister and run the flat for her and Brother. And Mrs. Mercer paid all expenses—doctors, tradesfolks and Brother's tuition at Columbia. The whole thing tore a mighty ragged and unsightly hole in a five-thousand-dollar bill, every year. But Mrs. Mercer was game. She never once screeched.

Just the same, peace and comfort flew out of the window pretty near as spry as Mrs. Mercer's guests would at sound of a patrol wagon bell. Five thousand dollars extra is a handicap that even a galloping Pittsburgher don't care to carry unless he has to. And it brought Mrs. Mercer into a half-Nelson with Worry. She could have cleared expenses nicely and maybe could have put something by; if she'd been let alone. But that additional five thousand dollars debit was too much.

Here's where nine people out of eight would begin to talk to you about the enormous profits of Mrs. Mercer's rotten trade and to wonder how a measly five thousand could keep her awake nights. And here's where that same fool idea is due to be exploded with a reverberating pop. By one Raegan. Let me tell you,

in a mouthful or so of words, some of the things that swallowed Mrs. Mercer's profits; same as they gobble the excess cash of every Merchant of Venus.

You're likely doping up in your mind what the rent of the average city house would be, and the cost of food and servants; and trying to subtract that petty sum from the profits. Likewise you're figuring what those profits must have been when Mrs. Mercer sold California champagne at seven dollars a quart and flat bottled domestic beer at seventy-five cents a pint and bum cigarettes at half a dollar the box of ten. And you're thinking her bank balance at the end of the month must have looked like John D. Carnebilt's, seen through a high power magnifier. So don't let me waste any of my loose time in getting your mind cleared up.

I don't know from experience the exact gross profits of such places, my own worst pursuits having been poorbox robbing and burning foundling asylums. But I do know, from all sorts of hearsay, what some of its disbursements are. Here's just a few of 'em:

Every tradesman soaked extra charges on the goods sent to Mrs. Mercer's, as soon as they found out what kind of house it was. Which was as soon as the first delivery was made. Guests weren't exactly on their least boisterous behavior, either; especially when they came there in a crowd from stag banquets. And that meant more breakage and general wear and tear and damage than the average restaurant would get in a year.

But those were minor expenses. The first big regular outlay, of course, was the monthly wad to the precinct captain's collector. And the captain himself had a sociable little way of dropping around in plain clothes and first sopping up, free, a couple of bottles of Mrs. Mercer's seven-dollar wine, and then breaking the news to her that there was a new and awful greedy inspector in the district who had ordered him to raise the monthly ante by twenty-five per cent.

Mrs. Mercer would pay the added bit. It was cheaper than to refuse. Then, like as not, she'd find that the captain had been transferred the next day and

had just been making a chunk of good-bye clean-up. A new captain would get on the job. And that meant a new contribution, right off, for Mrs. Mercer and her fellow landladies in the precinct. More holes in the gross receipts.

Another little bar to plutocracy was the credit system she must stand for. She had to let some of her richer patrons run up dizzy accounts. Most of these credit customers were Wall Streeters. And Wall Streeters of that class are apt to go broke pretty sudden and unexpected. And when they did, they'd get a fit of absence of memory about Mrs. Mercer's bill, and they'd transfer their trade to some house where their credit was still strong. A cute trick.

Say, did you ever stop to think what a cinch all men have in passing off counterfeit money on the Mrs. Mercers of this world? And how much of it is done? It's so easy that it's plain unsportsmanlike. Almost dishonest. A man with a bundle of phoney bills can always get rid of it at such places. If the bills are fairly well got up.

Mrs. Mercer couldn't tell a clever counterfeit bill from real currency, any more than you or most other amachoorers can. Especially by artificial light. She'd get loads of phoney money each month. What could she do? She couldn't have the men who palmed it on her arrested. Think it over a minute and you'll see she couldn't. It was a safe play on the part of the bad-money shovers. And it cut down Mrs. Mercer's profits, in swads, and left her every month with about half a wastebasket full of fives, tens, twenties, fifties and hundreds, that her bank was too haughty and fastidious to accept as deposits.

And yet you say the law is easier on women than on men? Any man could jug a man who handed him such bills for value received.

Liquors—especially beer—formed another big item. The case goods folks charged her a series of Klondike prices. And if she wouldn't pay, or said she was going to some other dealer, they'd threaten to squeal about the house to the Cruelty to Vice Society and get her closed down and maybe Blackwelled.

Don't you remember Mary Goode's testimony along just that same line? The newspapers were full of it a while back. But being in New York, it was all forgot a week later.

Servants, too, helped keep Mrs. Mercer from sleeping too peaceful. Say! Respectable folks think they're pestered by the servant question. They have a cinch. If they want to know what a nightmare the servant question really is—let 'em try running a place like Mrs. Mercer's.

She had to pay extra big wages, of course, to keep any sort of servants at all. Even black ones—the only kind generally that'll work for the Rahabettes. Besides big wages, she had to stand for quick raises, for laziness, for incompetence, for every fault a servant can have. If she tried to fire her servants, or gave them a hot calldown, they'd be back at her in a second with the good old threat to expose her and to give evidence that would put her out of business.

The rent game was played on Mrs. Mercer, too. You know the stunt? It's very simple. A set of real estate agents make a business of renting houses and flats to Mercers. They charge hideous sums; and at that they aren't content. When such agents want a piece of extra coin, they get the cops—for a consideration—to close up a batch of houses. The Mercers have to get new places in a hurry. The agents get them the new homes they want. And charge double for speed—and other things. It's a fine industry.

What's the use of wasting breath on more instances? Mrs. Mercer and her kind are everybody's prey. Honest, I don't know whether it's rottener to be a Merchant of Venus or one of the swarm that bleed her. But I guess I've told you enough to show you what those glittering gross profits of Mrs. Mercer's amounted to by the time the gross was boiled down to net. And what shape she was in to stand that added load of five thousand dollars a year for the upkeep of Brother and Little Sister.

Understand me. She could have kept going, as regiments of others do, even under all the regular drains of her busi-

ness, but she couldn't carry that yearly five-thousand-dollar outlay besides. Not one Merchant of Venus in a hundred could have done that.

At first Mrs. Mercer fought; and fought hard. She had all the pluck there is. And she was mad, clear through, at the fear of having to lose the beloved career she'd picked out. She squared her front-extension chin and scowled the way she imagined Mme. de Pompadour must have in one of her near-royal rages. (Oh, yes. Every woman thinks she looks like some siren of history. Just as every woman knows, at heart, that she could be a great actress if she had half a quarter of a chance. And just as every tubby, undersized, smooth-shaven, light-eyed man thinks he looks like Napoleon; and loves to pull down his forelock and cross his fat little arms and glower into the shaving glass when he's all alone.)

Next, Mrs. Mercer swallows her rage and gets down to work to cut expenses and boost trade. And fate counters on her by causing a financial panic in the Street and the electing of a reform city Administration at the same time. Poor Mrs. Mercer!

It was a double wave that swamped many a wabby craft, disreputable and otherwise, that year. It clamped shut the city's lid and its spenders' pockets at one swash. But, at that, it only hurried along for Mrs. Mercer a day that was already overdue and that had to come soon or late; thanks to that same five-thousand-dollar overweight.

She looked out through the shutters at the harness bull stationed by a reform-for-revenue-only police captain outside her door. She looked at the list of bad debts, the piled-up tradesmen duns, and the higher pile of counterfeit yellows. And she wished for once in her life that she was still respectable; so she could cry on some woman friend's divan, tell her pastor her troubles, and then be snappy to her husband and maybe discharge the cook.

But what could she do? She had no woman friend left—of the sort one cries to. Her husband was still farther away. She was too frankly an animal to soil any

church with her presence; so she had no pastor. To discharge the cook was a luxury she and her kind are mostly afraid to indulge in.

Then she sat up all night going over her books, and in the morning she had 'em balanced. But she'd also proved that the five thousand dollars would overbalance 'em.

In on her blues sneaked the reform-for-revenue-only captain's wardman, with a hint that the policeman could be shoved from the door and business could be discreetly resumed at second speed—if Mrs. Mercer would come across with a sum that staggered belief and would follow it with double her former monthly payments. The new captain, you see, was a human man. And he couldn't bear to see anyone go broke from lack of business. Not even himself.

Mrs. Mercer heard out the message. Then she thought a minute and said to the wardman—or maybe to herself:

"The anchor isn't much use after the ship is wrecked. Is it?"

The wardman, who'd got pretty well acquainted with her, on his official visits—his name just happened to be Raegan, by some queer twist—didn't quite understand what she was getting at. He told her so. She didn't bother to explain, but went on:

"Tell the captain I can't pay it. Tell him I'm never going to pay anything again to anyone of the vulture breed. That means a raid. I know. Now, for old time's sake, slip me a warning when to expect it. I'll try to see it's spectacular enough to put the captain's name in every paper. Tell him so."

She got word half an hour later that the raid was scheduled for eleven fifteen that evening. And the cop was taken away from in front of the door. That reform captain sure had sense. If only in his wardman's name. He took her tip and played it strong. Sweet are the uses of advertisement.

Mrs. Mercer hadn't much time to squander. So she used every inch of it. First she telephoned to about thirty men—big names, some of them. They all chanced to be delinquent credit customers or chaps who had inadvertently left

phoney money with her. She told them all was forgiven, and that tonight was the night she was going to give such a party as time would hereafter date from. Everything was to be free; in honor of a big legacy she'd just fallen into. And there was going to be a big and separate surprise for every guest. Likewise, no one would be admitted later'n eleven ten P.M.

She called up the head of the liquor firm that supplied her, and the real estate partners, and invited them, too. And on the last shred of her credit she bought the eats and the booze for the supper. After which she tipped off a few reporters she knew.

To cap the climax of glorious achievement, she went downstairs and fired her servants; first explaining tenderly just what she thought of them. Especially the cook. She told me afterward that kitchen scene was the first moment of pure and exalted soul joy she had known since before her baby died.

At 12.15 A.M. the next day there was a bigger, shame-facer and better-dressed assortment of John Smiths in the Night Court than had adorned that sunless resort since the biggest Canfield raid. Gee, but the reporters wallowed deep that night; and the papers printed worth-while stuff in the morning! And that week's issue of *Social Blitherings* sold out an hour after it was published.

Some night! It's talked of yet. The captain was afraid of the reform magistrate. And the magistrate was afraid of the reform captain. So the two of 'em done their dooty as they seen it. And the John Smith clan was forever disgraced. Some members of it in their own name.

So much for trying to get something for nothing. Never do that, son. Offer it, but never take it. Those simps might have known enough to shy clear to the other side of the road when a woman like Mattie Mercer offered a wholesale party—*free*.

She had played Samson, all right, in her fall.

As soon as she could shake clear of the law, Mrs. Mercer made a round of chatty

little office visits to a few kind gentlemen she knew. And while all of them scowled fierce when she came in, yet they all came meekly across with cheques of one size or another by the time she was through talking to them. So, by the time the last call was paid, Mrs. Mercer had a cozy little stake for a new game.

Did she start over again in the only trade where "Mrs." and "Madam" never can mean the same thing? Not she. She was clever. Even if her life's ambitions was all wrecked about her feet. She used the money in the one way that was left open to her.

Her hopes were smashed. Her career was over. Her apology-for-a-heart was dead. But the world had to roll on just the same. And five thousand dollars per year had to be found to keep Brother and Little Sister going.

The law had driven Mrs. Mercer out of matrimony into something worse. And now, as I hinted to you before, it drove her into the *very* worst. But that was all it could do to her. It drove her where it could never again have any more hold over her.

Suicide? Son, how many times have I got to ding it into your folding ears that Mattie Mercer was *clever*.

No, sir. It turned her respectable. That's what the law's final swat did to her. Through what the Socialists call "Economic pressure," the poor harassed dame was driven into respectability.

She rented a big, old-fashioned house on the West Side, stocked it with fake old-fashioned furniture that Sheraton and Chippendale and Hepplewhite would have sobbed over; and—she started an ultra-exclusive, super-high-priced boarding house.

Not the funny story boarding house. But the kind that's as hard to get into as the Metropolitan Club or the Newport cottage crowd. The type of boarding house where you must be recommended and vouched for, and then investigated and maybe be turned down after all.

There's no siren or other lure in this sheep-souled old world half so enticing as a "No Admittance" sign. And when you make any place hard to get into, you

put it, right away, on the top line of the Desirable List.

Mrs. Mercer was dead wise to that. So, after the crash that broke her heart, she set the new trap accordingly. Instead of hanging out a come-all-ye invitation in front of her new boarding house, she began by turning people away as ineligible. That started the rush.

She'd cleared the decks in good shape for the move. After the raid she had vanished for a day or two. And during that time she had sent a batch of cute little farewell notes to the cops and the rest of the carrion flock. Notes that bade 'em a sweet good-bye and promised never to bother any of 'em again, and wound up by saying that by the time the postman delivered the notes, she'd be on her way to Europe, where she was going to stay forever. amen—being sore on lively New York.

Next she dyes that Titian thatch of hers to a rusty black and puts on a pair of dinky little gold-rimmed eyeglasses.

Those two precautions—the notes and the new headpiece effect—was all she needed, especially in New York. Madam Mercer was dead and gone forever. And to the good old occasionally-sunny, hard-worked South she reaches for a new self.

With the result that she starts her boarding house as Mrs. Jubal Lee Fauquier; the Richmond relict of a silver-lunged Virginia Senator; and the daughter of a professionally gallant Confederate general who had fallen in defense of States' Rights shortly before the first battle of Bull Run.

The South is always a sure card. And the farther north you go, the better it gets.

Mattie ran the boarding house just to keep her from having time to brood over her past glories in the dreamy Southland.

The prices she charged helped a lot, too. Folks will break themselves to see a six-dollar show when they'd be dead leary of it if the admission was fifty cents.

And when she turned an orphan girl boarder out of the house for sitting in

the parlor till eleven thirty with a fellow the girl was engaged to—why, Mrs. Fauquier's establishment straightway got a name for lofty propriety that made out-of-town mothers fall over their own feet in the rush to pay frontier rates for the privilege of placing their music-study daughters in her pure charge.

Business boomed. Mrs. Fauquier rented three houses in a row, and she cleared all her expenses off her top floors. Why shouldn't she? She was getting any prices she had the blasphemy to ask. The Confederacy's fall was avenged. And as it was such a high privilege to be one of the Fauquier boarders, she could save a lot on food. She had no hush money to pay to cops or liquor men or real estaters or any of the vulture flock. Tradesmen scrapped for her custom, and made special cut rates for her. She was able to live nicely off the class of folks who had once lived off her. Servants loved to work for her. It gave them a standing for future places. She had nobody to be afraid of. She was safe at every square on the board. She had taught the servants and boarders to call her "*Madam Fauquier*." They supposed it was a Southern custom.

Was she happy? You'd think so, with a land office income, a good conscience,

no worry and the respect of her community.

But—if you lose what you want most, will you be happy with what's wished on you in its place? Not you. Not anyone. Certainly not Mrs. Jubal Lee Fauquier—formerly Mattie Mercer.

Her boarders used to whisper that there was a heartbreaking, far-away look sometimes in Madam Fauquier's big red-brown eyes. There was, too. She was listening for the giggles of girls, the snickers and guffaws of men, the click of booze glasses, the dicker of the wardman and the patrol wagon bell. Once when an ambulance clanged through the street at dinner time, she almost lost everything by coming suddenly out of a trance and yelling:

"There's a getaway route by the basement that they aren't on to!"

Yes, Mattie has everything a woman can want. And she's dead homesick and miserable. It's the cruel law that's made her so.

Raegan lighted another putrescent cigar, shook out the match and resumed:

"Yes, son, here in New York the temptation to be respectable is apt to be too strong for a poor weak woman to resist!"



AT A SUBWAY STATION

By Sara Teasdale

AFTER a year I came again to the place;
 The tireless lights and the reverberation,
 The angry thunder of trains that burrow the ground,
 The hunted, hurrying people were still the same—
 But oh, another man beside me and not you!
 Another voice and other eyes in mine!
 And suddenly I turned and saw again
 The gleaming curve of tracks, the bridge above—
 They were burned deep into my heart before,
 The night I watched them to avoid your eyes.

PERTINENT AND IMPERTINENT

By Owen Hatteras

FROM THE PROGRAM OF A
SYMPHONY CONCERT

“**R**UHM und Ewigkeit” (Fame and Eternity), a symphonic poem in B flat minor, Opus 26, by Johann Sigismund Timotheus Albert Wolfgang Schmidt (1872-).

Schmidt, like his great compatriot, Richard Strauss, has gone to Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, that laureate of the modern German tone art, for his inspiration in this noble work. His text is to be found in Nietzsche’s “Ecce Homo,” which was not published until after the poet’s death, but the composition really belongs to “Also Sprach Zarathustra,” as the student will readily perceive at a glance:

I

Wie lange sitzt du schon
auf deinem Missgeschick?
Gieb Acht! Du brüttest mir noch
ein Ei,
ein Basilisken-Ei,
aus deinem langen Jammer aus.

II

Was schleicht Zarathustra entlang dem Berge?

III

Misstrauisch, geschwürig, düster,
ein langer Lauerer—
aber plötzlich, ein Blitz,
hell, furchtbar, ein Schlag
gen Himmel aus dem Abgrund:
—dem Berge selber schüttelt sich
das Eingeweide. . . .

IV

Wo Hass und Blitzstrahl
Eins ward, ein Fluch—
auf dem Berge haust jetzt Zarathustra’s Zorn,
eine Wetterwolke schleicht er seines Wegs.

V

Verkrieche sich, wer eine letzte Decke hat!
In’s Bett mit euch, ihr Zärtlingel
Nun rollen Donner über die Gewölbe,
nun zillert, was Gebülk und Mauer ist,
nun zucken Blitze und schwefelgelbe Wahrheiten—
Zarathustra flucht. . . .!

For the following faithful and graceful translation the present commentator is indebted to Miss Carpathia Genevieve Snead, of the Boston Conservatory of Music:

I

How long brood you now
On my disaster?
Give heed! You hatch me soon
An egg,
A basilisk’s egg,
By your long lamentation.

II

Why does Zarathustra prowl among the mountains?

III

Distrustful, ulcerated, dismal,
A long waiter—
But suddenly a flash,
Brilliant, fearful. A lightning stroke
Leaps to heaven from the abyss:
—The mountains shake themselves and
Their intestines. . . .

IV

As hate and lightning flash
Are united, a curse—
On the mountains rages now Zarathustra’s
wrath,
Like a thunder cloud rolls it on its way.

V

Crawl away, ye who have a roof remaining!
To bed with you, ye tender ones!
Now thunder rolls over the great arches,
Now tremble the bastions and battlements,
Now flashes palpitate and sulphur yellow
truths—
Zarathustra swears. . . .!

The composition is scored for three flutes, one piccolo, one bass piccolo, two oboes, an English horn, three clarinets in D flat, one clarinet in G flat, one corno di bassetto, three bassoons, one contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, four cornets in B, four trombones, two alto trombones, two tubas, glockenspiel, bell, triangle, fife, bass drum, cymbals, timpani, celesta, four harps, one tenor harp, and the usual strings.

At the opening a long B flat is sounded by cornets, clarinets and contrabassoon in unison, with soft strokes upon a kettledrum tuned to G flat. After three measures of this, *singhiozzando*, the strings enter *pizzicato* with a figure based upon one of the ancient scales of the Persians—B flat, B, D, E sharp, G and A flat—which starts high among the first violins, and proceeds downward, through the second violins, violas and cellos, until it becomes lost in indistinct and solemn mutterings by the double-basses. Then, the atmosphere of doom having been established, as it were, and the conductor having found his place in the score, there is heard the motive of brooding, first given out by three trombones:

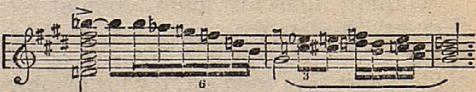


To the stately phrase of the brass, as will be noted, the English horn soon adds a more rapid figure. It is joined almost at once by the strings and the rest of the wood wind and there is a loud crash upon the G natural, after which the whole theme is restated in C major, but with flutes and violoncellos leading. There follows a rapid and daring development of the theme, during which, in the course of four measures, it appears in the keys of D minor, A major, C flat major, G sharp minor and F sharp major, and with the first phrase in contrary motion and the little run for English horn increased to seven, thirteen, nineteen and finally 33½ notes. Then, as the round of keys is completed and the theme is once more given out in B flat minor, the violas and

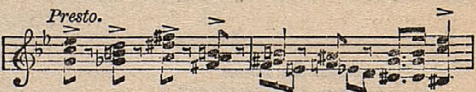
piccolo announce the *missgeschick motif*, or motive of disaster (misfortune, evil destiny, untoward fate), as follows:



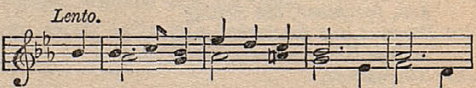
This, it will be noted, is merely a development, in augmentation, of part of the motive of brooding. At once the two are further developed side by side, the rest of the strings joining the violas, and the oboes and clarinets help out the piccolo. Meanwhile the *tempo* is gradually quickened, and the whole orchestra works up to a brilliant climax, followed by a grand pause. Then, of a sudden, comes the motive of warning, in the key of E major, for the whole body of strings and brass, thus:



This motive, without further statement or development, leads directly into the theme of the basilisk, or, as the German commentators call it, the egg motive, which is first given to the upper strings *pizzicato*:



A repetition for wood wind, in A minor, but without other change, is followed by a restatement by the strings in C sharp major, with the horns and trombones sounding snatches of the brooding and disaster motives below. Then the clarinets take up the egg motive, but this time in three-quarter time, which prepares the way for the entrance of the motive of lamentation, given out by the strings:



Schmidt's mastery of the orchestra is shown here by the eerie and beautiful effect he gets by stopping the F holes of the violins. The directions in the score say *mit glaserkitt* (that is, with glaziers'

putty), but the men of the orchestra prefer to use pumpnickel, for it does less damage to the varnish of the violins, and besides, it is edible afterward. Its use produces a peculiarly ingratiating tone, mysterious and far away. No doubt Berlioz was seeking the same effect when he proposed the use of a bow strung with hangman's hemp.

After the lamentation theme has been duly worked out, first in a homophonic tour of the keys, then as a sparkling fugetta, and finally in polyphonic association with the themes of brooding and disaster and over a ground-bass made by changing the solemn chord of warning into an arpeggio for doublebasses *pizzicato*, there enters for the first time the double theme of Zarathustra, perhaps the loveliest and most original of all Schmidt's melodic ideas:



The first statement of the theme, in the key of D major, is by two oboes and a solo clarinet in D. It is followed at once by the theme of disaster (from which, it will be noted, the mournful half-notes, descending in a chromatic sob, are taken) and the two are gorgeously worked out during forty or more measures. Then the Zarathustra theme is heard again, once more in D major, but now in combination with a new theme in A minor, thus:



What this new theme may mean is a point of some controversy among commentators. Ludwig Schnorr, of Leipzig, calls it the theme of prowling, but Prof. B. Moll, of the Musikalische Hochschule at Göttingen, insists that it is the theme of "the elevated mood produced by the height and loneliness of the mountains." Schmidt himself, when asked by Dr. Fritz Bratsche, musical critic of the Berlin *Volkszeitung*, shrugged his shoulders and answered in his native Hamburg dialect: "*So geht das Leben. 'S giebt gar kein Use*"—Such is life: it gives hardly any use (to inquire?). Students of musical history will recall

Beethoven's similar answer to a question regarding the fateful opening notes of the Fifth Symphony. In much the same way Schubert made reply to one who asked the meaning of the brisk figure for violins in the first movement of the Unfinished: "*Halt's Maul, du verfluchter Narr!*"—Don't ask such questions, my dear sir.

But though we may never penetrate the composer's meaning here, at least with any exactness, we may still admire the masterly manner in which he has overcome apparently insurmountable difficulties. At the start, as has been stated, the Zarathustra motive appears in D major and the theme of prowling (or elevation) in A minor. But the former quickly changes to C sharp minor and the latter to B flat major, and thereafter comes a dizzy gallop through the keys. Once, when the Zarathustra motive gets into A flat minor, the motive of prowling reaches C flat major, and it seems as if the mad pursuit were at an end, but suddenly the composer turns the joke upon the auditor and makes a further display of his virtuosity by bringing in the motive of the basilisk's egg—in C major! The effect, of course, is indescribably exotic and beautiful, and so is the ensuing cadenza for three harps, in the key of C minor. This cadenza leads at once to the theme of waiting, which is thus given out by the whole orchestra in unison:



The motive of warning, in inversion, is now heard among the harps, fifes and bassoons, after which there is a brief development of the theme of waiting, Haydnesque in its clarity, followed by the sudden entrance of the flash theme:



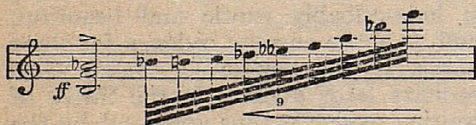
This theme, in different keys, alternates with the theme of waiting for a few minutes, after which the lofty theme of the mountains is heard in the wood wind, first being given out in B flat minor and by bass piccolo and fife:



The strings join in almost immediately and soon the whole movement of the composition is quickened. The lower brasses bray snatches of the disaster, brooding and basilisk motives, the cellos sing the song of lamentation, the double basses return again and again to the theme of Zarathustra, and the oboes and English horns answer with the theme of prowling, always in distant and unrelated keys. Then come two motives, first that of the abyss (for contrabassoon):



And then that of the curse (for trombones and harps):



After which the final section of the tone poem begins. Only two more themes are introduced thereafter, the first being that of crawling and the second that of tenderness ("ye tender ones"). The former is introduced by the double-basses, *col legno dell' arco*, but the other instruments are making so much noise at the time and there is usually so much shuffling of feet among the audience that it can't be heard by the naked ear. The theme of tenderness, which is first stated by trombones,

with trumpets, bass drum and glockenspiel aiding, is better introduced:



We now come to the climax of the composition, and behold Schmidt at amazing feats of polyphonic derring-do. First there is a complete restatement of all the themes so far heard, from that of brooding to that of tenderness, by the whole orchestra *fortissimo*, and then all of them are transposed into their relative major or minor keys and played backward. After this there begins a fugue upon the theme of waiting, leading into the theme of the mountains as second subject and the theme of the basilisk as third subject. Here Johann Sebastian Bach would have stopped, but if Schmidt stops, it is only to spit upon his hands. A fourth subject enters in the horns—the theme of prowling. A fifth—the theme of the curse. A sixth—the theme of the long wait. A seventh, eighth, ninth—the themes of warning, of lamentation, of the abyss. A tenth—the beautiful *leitmotif* of Zarathustra, now transformed into a solemn march.

And every one of these motives brings its own key! Some of them, true enough, occasionally show temporary modulations—the natural consequence of the titanic difficulties of the composer's task. But from first to last the Zarathustra motive booms along in the key of D major, and that of brooding wails and whinnies in B flat minor, and that of disaster stalks through the maze in G, and that of tenderness whoops and howls in C major. The composer's palette is set with myriad and splendid colors. The stark yellows of A major leap out from the dull grays of A and A flat minor. The brilliant vermilion of G major gives depth and atmosphere to the cool blue of F. The vernal greens of the flat keys from E flat to C flat make a background for the heliotropes and violets of C sharp and the imperial purples of B. And over all shines the bright actinic sunshine of C major, the key of courage and young love, of high

hills and the open sea, of the harp of David and the interstellar spaces.

At this place, one may perhaps safely presume, Wagner would have given up. Here Tschaikowsky would have gone down for the count. Here Richard Strauss would have yelled for a doctor and fainted away. Here even Dubussy would have turned white, blinked his eyes and muttered "*Mon Dieu!*" But Schmidt, the wizard, has just begun. Is he in the midst of ten themes, of twenty-six major and minor keys? Pish! A mere trifle! Each theme suggests new themes to his electric and ferro-concrete brain. The theme of the basilisk's egg, inverted, augmented and diminished, is doubled, tripled, quadrupled. The G flat, B natural and D natural of its second chord, torn apart and scattered across the staff, make an entirely new theme—a theme insidious and seductive, a libidinous Wiener waltz. And out of the third chord comes a polka in C sharp minor! And out of the closing phrases a fanfare for trumpets! And out of the rests, the signature and the ledger lines a cadenza for cymbal and triangle! One theme has now become eight themes. So with each and all—and more. The ten with which the mad saturnalia of harmony was begun are reinforced by the three overlooked, and out of the thirteen come one hundred and twenty-three.

There are, however, but eighty-five instruments in the orchestra! How is this stupendous masterwork to be played? Easily enough. For the thirty-two violins, the twelve violas and the ten violoncellos—double stops. For the harps—ten themes each. And haven't kettledrums two hands? A magnificent delirium of sound! Great whirls and whorls of melody. Chords of the ninth, the eleventh, the seventeenth, the thirty-eighth! Stupendous crashes and explosions. The yelp and yammering of the fiddles! The bawling of the brass! The shrilling and soughing of the wood wind! The thunder of the tympani! . . . One final scream of the whole orchestra, *forte possibile*—and the *magnum opus* of the great German is at an end.

Johann Sigismund Timotheus Albert Wolfgang Schmidt was born at Hamburg on January 14, 1872. At the age of three years he performed creditably upon the zither, autoharp and cornet, and by 1876 he had already appeared in concert at Düsseldorf, Cologne and Bonn. His father, a well-to-do exporter of Bismarck herring, planned to train him for the family profession and was opposed to his further pursuit of music, but young Johann showed so much talent that he was finally apprenticed to a cornetist in Hamburg, and at the age of ten was a recognized master of the great Zulu instrument. In 1884 he went to Berlin and became fourth cornetist of the Philharmonic Orchestra. Meanwhile he also studied the violin, second violin and viola and began taking lessons in harmony from Himmelheber, formerly third triangle and assistant librarian at Bayreuth.

His first composition, a march for cornet, violin and piano, was performed on July 18, 1886, at the annual ball of the Arbeiter Liedertafel in Berlin. It attracted little attention, but six months later the young composer made musical Berlin talk about him by producing a composition called "*Adenoids*," for twelve tenors, a *cappella*, to words by Otto Julius Bierbaum. This was first heard at an open air concert given in the Tiergarten by the Sozialistliederkranz. It was soon afterward repeated by the choir of the Gottesgelehrtheitsakademie, and Schmidt found himself a famous young man. His string quartet in G sharp minor, first played early in 1889 by the quartet led by Prof. Rudolph Bierfisch, added to his growing celebrity, and when his first tone poem for orchestra, "*Fuchs, Du Hast die Gans Gestolen*," was done by the Philharmonic in the autumn of 1889, under Dr. Lachschen, it was hailed with acclaim.

Schmidt has since written twenty-seven symphonies, nineteen tone poems, a suite for brass and tympani, a trio for harp, tuba and glockenspiel, ten string quartets, a serenade for flute and contrapiccolo, four overtures, a cornet concerto and many song and piano pieces.

His best-known work, perhaps, is his symphony in F flat major, in which he introduces the ancient folksong of the Plattdeutsch, "Von Hamburg Gi'g zu Ritzepittel." But Schmidt himself thinks little of this work. His own favorite is said to be "Ruhm und Ewigkeit," though he is also fond of the tone poem which preceded it, "Rinderbrust und Meerrettig," first produced in 1903. "Ruhm und Ewigkeit" had its initial performance at the Leipsic Gewandhaus

in 1906, and has been given since by most of the great orchestras of the world. It presents enormous difficulties to the performers. A piano transcription for sixteen hands has been published.

Schmidt is now a resident of Munich, where he conducts the orchestra at the Löwenbräuhaus. He has been married eighteen times and is at present the ninth husband of Tilly Heintz, the opera singer, who created the role of Isabella in "Robert der Teufel."



HIS STENOGRAPHER

As he dictates to her

By Harriet Monroe

DOES she love you? Well, I wonder—
 Married twenty years, they say!
 You, so bald and fat and funny,
 Grubbing like a mole for money!
 Guess she likes to spend the plunder—
 Gee—she knows the way!

She's a grand one—Lord, what dresses!
 Handsome, too, proud as a queen—
 With her doings in the papers,
 Dinners, dances, all the capers,
 Likes to lead the show, my guess is!
 You're the gold machine!

If she knew you as I know you,
 Would she spend it—say?
 If she knew each trick and quibble,
 Little fishes hooked that nibble,
 Business murders—would she show you
 Such a grandstand play?

You're a savage money maker—
 Good to her, though, sure—and me.
 Kind old pirate! What in thunder
 Does she think of you, I wonder?
 What neat stories do you take her—
 So she will not see?

ADMIRAL PAUL JONES—AND GWEN

By Captain Owen Vaughan

WE'RE all always hearing about the great Paul Jones, Scots admiral of the United States, and darling of the French in the days when our friends across the lately abolished frontier needed some comfort on the sea. Every once in a while, too, a fresh book comes out about him, entitled, "The Wonderful Life and Surprising Adventures of Paul Jones," or words to that effect. But you'll search them all, fore and aft, and then you'll still not find this tale they tell on the shores of Cardigan Bay, by which you'll begin to suspect that not all of his life is in his "Life," for all the number he's had in print.

After all, I expect it's because he never told his press agent about this particular episode, which again I expect is because it has to do with *y morwynion glan Meirionydd*, that is to say, the lovely maids of Merioneth, and no man could well stand to have all his affairs with women told and winked over in every fair and marketplace in the land.

And, as befits a tale which has to do with the ladies, this tale isn't even told all over Merioneth. There is a famous harp tune, called by the name of these *morwynion glan Meirionydd*, much in vogue at *penillion* singing contests, where the harper strikes up the tune and the contester must pitch in with a voice which he makes up on the spur of the moment, so that the maids of Merioneth, having such a chuckling, wheedling little tune to their name, are more besung than any other maids in the whole wide world, I'll be bound. But yet you may go to any local *eisteddvod* you like, in the comots of Ystimaner, Ardudwy or Penllyn, and still you'll never hear a

verse on this subject of Paul Jones and the Maids of Merioneth, unless afterward, in the tavern nearby, you drop across some handsome, hoarse-voiced old mariner from Aberdovey or Bermo, far gone in his third quart, and then you'll hear it—that and nothing else, if you're all right yourself.

This tale begins with Gwen, or rather it doesn't; it begins with the fact that Gwen—Gwen with the flashing black eyes and the glossy black hair and the wild rose cheek and the ivory neck; Gwen with the bust and the waist and the foot that would catch the eye of a saint and then dance with him till daylight; Gwen with the white teeth and the terrible temper when she didn't like you, especially if she didn't like you "any more"—this tale begins, then, with the fact that Gwen was one of the two servants of old Mog Vlewog; meaning Morgan the Hairy; captain and owner of *The Belles of Aberdovey*, which was the first foretops'l schooner, as we say now, ever built on the shores of Cardigan Bay, which is the home of that rig.

But even that fact isn't quite the beginning of this story. It really goes back to the fact that Mog Vlewog got very, very full of pineapple rum on his last trip to Cardiff from Wexford. He found himself dropping down with the tide next morning, hauling round Penarth and out past Lavernoc, with nothing aboard for cargo except six great cannon and one Long Tom, with ammunition to match, and no entry in his manifest to show how the deuce he came by such a cargo, or what in the name of man he was going to do with it now he'd got it.

Only when he'd got well out to sea,

and had turned in and slept so long that when he waked he could lift his head without needing both hands to help his neck, did he begin to rummage in his pockets and there find an everyday bill of sale, all right and regular, whereby Messrs. John Bunkum and William Gammon—or names to that effect—acknowledged the receipt of thirty-five pounds on account, part payment for six great guns and one Long Tom, made by the famous Pont-y-Pool Cannon Foundry, of a kind most suitable for trading to Irish rebels—so said this most insinuating document.

Captain Hairy Morgan Williams read that suggestive line just once and then he shot the document out to arm's length and glared at it, reading the clearing scenes of remembrance through it as he held it there. And if this story were only the story of that transaction in great guns, it would be a wonderful story, a story that would burn holes in the paper, that is, if we had to use the same words that Hairy Morgan used as he stood there, holding that document and recounting to it even as much as he remembered of the whole affair. His very beard, which covered all his face except his eyes, seemed to bristle over it.

He remembered those guns quite well. They had been lying there on the wharf when he hauled into Cardiff and tied up. He remembered that they were there by mistake, sent to Cardiff from Pont-y-Pool instead of to Bristol, where they were intended for a Bristol West Indianman just launched, and the agent who was then waiting a chance to send them on to Bristol was certainly not either John Bunkum or William Gammon or any other partner in that ancient and still flourishing firm.

And after he had recalled all he could, and still found himself short by some links of the chain, he called Gitto Draed down to tell him the rest. Now Gitto Draed—Griffith of the Feet (and they really were a very impressive pair of feet for length)—was his brother-in-law as well as his mate, and he had been waiting for this chance. Never mind the details. They were full of a red-headed—well, charmer, and two—well,

swindlers that couldn't have imposed on a ten-year-old village idiot—and rum, pineapple rum, mixed with one utter, hopeless, sealed pattern of all the pouter pigeons that ever were snared and plucked. Gitto Draed had been captain of the foretop in more than one King's ship, and so he knew all the necessary English words for such a narrative. And when he'd used up his English, he still had all his ancient, native and very incisive Welsh to carry on with.

Fair play to Mog Vlewog, he took it all with a stiff upper lip, as if his dead wife's face was always between him and her brother. But when that brother ended by advising him to heave the cannon overboard and be done with the mess, Mog's business instincts bristled at once. He was not heaving any thirty-five pounds into the sea like that.

"I must sell 'em," he said, in a voice intended to settle that point once for all.

"And give a title out of that document," suggested Gitto dryly. "Of a kind suitable for trading to the Irish rebels. The nearest magistrate—eh?"

Mog Vlewog felt that his back was to the wall. "Then that's what I'll do. I'll sell 'em to the Irish rebels"—whereupon Gitto Draed, having used up his English, selected enough sprinkled Welsh to ask him when the Irish rebels were going to begin, and where they were going to get the fleet necessary to use those guns, which were ship's guns and not land guns at all. To which Mog Vlewog answered by swearing that he was still not going to waste that thirty-five pounds, for all that. "I'll turn pirate and use the guns myself first," he said and swore.

Gitto Draed was even less impressed by that. "You're late for that market," he returned. "Paul Jones is already getting all there is to be got out of pirating. All over Cardiff the news was that Paul Jones is cruising off the Scillies; taken no less than three big West Indianmen this last week he has."

Mog Vlewog woke up at that. "Off the Scillies, was he? Then a sharp lookout you'll be keeping and hug the coast," he cried. "Sooner be wrecked than captured any day, me."

So that's the way the guns came to be in the ship, and also that's the kind of master Gwen served, when he was at home.

But there was more to Mog Vlewog than that. If there hadn't been, then this wonderful tale would never have happened, and the great Paul Jones, pirate or admiral and so forth, would never have met the fair maids of Merioneth, to his own most complete flabbergasting. You have heard already that Mog's wife was dead. Yet—perhaps for that very reason—he refused to give up that snug little house of his that stood on a little cape a mile or so up the estuary from Aberdovey, but kept it going the whole year round, whether he were away with the ship or not, which meant the pay and provand of two maids to be reckoned for in his outgoings, with no return for the expenditure for months at a time.

To remedy that last extravagance, however, his careful instincts had devised both ways and means of achieving a certain economy, all depending upon the pleasure of the wind. The map will show you that the estuary of the Dovey runs south of west, and as the sou'west wind does not blow more than three hundred and sixty-five days in that country, except maybe in leap year, it follows that *The Belles of Aberdovey* might lie windbound in the harbor for weeks at a time. Therefore Mog Vlewog had a weathercock fixed on the roof of his house, and every morning on awaking he would sing out and demand of the maids which way the wind was. So long as the wind was in the west to sou'west, Mr. Hairy Morgan would roll over and indulge in another nap.

Yet, as miracles do happen, once in a while the wind would be in another quarter. Then up would jump Mog Vlewog. With his great key he would unlock the storeroom door. Then he would count the days of the voyage he was going to make, and dole out that number of rations for the two maids left behind to look after the house; that and no more; precisely as he victualled the ship herself. And after locking the storeroom door again, he would stow the key in his

breeches pocket and away to his merry, merry life on the ocean wave, as the songs say, whatever the seamen think.

Now, whereas there was usually plenty to eat in the house between voyages, this time the loss of the thirty-five pounds, as well as the profit lost on the lost cargo out of Cardiff, had stiffened Mog's economical instincts till they fairly bristled. The food you'll snatch from a bristling mastiff will hardly keep you very fat, therefore Gwen—Gwen of the unfathomable black eyes and the suddenly demure brains behind it—devised a plan. Next morning the weathercock reported the wind north-easterly. Of all the winds in the world, northeast was the wind for Mog. Down he came, nearly paralyzed the ship's youngest boy (who slept at the house) with the vigor of the way he ordered him to rush off to tell the crew to get aboard, unlocked that storeroom door and doled out the rations. Then, with his hat well back and his beard well forward, away he went for the ship, never thinking to more than squint up at the weathercock.

He hadn't been gone two hundred yards before Gwen turned to Nanno, the other maid, and the two fell into each other's arms in the wildest shrieks of laughter. He hadn't been gone five hundred yards before the two brought round the ladder from behind the house, set it up against the gable, and up went Gwen, to take out the little wedge she had stuck in the collar of the weathercock to keep his comb nor'east. Merrily swung that weather-wise bird till he showed a wind due west, though flowing west by north. Then Gwen came down and away that ladder was whisked.

Now though Mog Vlewog walked slowly enough, through the woods that grew there then, yet it wasn't a very long mile to Aberdovey and the ship, where he would meet the wind in his face—and what then? Well, these two maids of Merioneth had told each other defiantly that they didn't care; the food was out of that room, and he wouldn't dare put it back again for shame.

But, once that vane was veering, they

looked each other in the face and their hearts began to sink, and it was then that Nanno cried out faintly, "I wish Shon *bach* was here." John Bach, as you will feel, was Nanno's dearie, and as, if you talk of the Devil, that polite person will either come, or at least rattle his chains in cheery acknowledgment of the compliment, so in now walked Shon *bach*.

Yet, had John Bach come alone (*bach* has two meanings in Welsh, like the equivalent French *petit*) this tale would never have happened, Gwen or no Gwen. But John Bach was as dark as Gwen herself, and that's the reason, one supposes, why he brought a companion who was just as red as he was black.

You've all heard about the "Gwyl-liard Cochion Mowddwy"—the Wild Red Bandits of the Mowddwy. Well, if they had never been twice defeated and then driven out of Dinas Mowddwy, after some of the most epically savage deeds in history, then one of their red descendants, Meilir Bryngwyn, would never have been born in the next valley to Aberdovey, to come over the hill and down the glyn this morning, with Shon *bach*, whistling all the way, to look suddenly into the eyes of Gwen, for the first time, and straightway tell her not to worry, everything was quite all right. And when a young man stands just about six foot, and is built as round and as straight as a pine tree, and has golden eyelashes and eyebrows and a red-brown mustache and red-brown eyes as well as light red hair—well, that's something, especially if you can see by his face that he never worried about anything in his life and never will.

So, after all, we find that this tale really begins with the defeat and dispersion of the Red Bandits of the Mowddwy, so long ago as that.

For by the time this Meilir (whose many epithets can be added up by calling him Meilir Come-day-go-day-God-send-Sunday) had looked once at Gwen and Gwen at him, Nanno had blurted out the whole tale at large, and Meilir had shown the way out by kissing Gwen, and then still holding her in his arms

while she boxed his ears till they tingled. Shon *bach* was stating his intention of stripping and planting himself in the doorway, ready to challenge Mog Vlewog to strip, too, and fight it out naked in good old Welsh fashion, but the descendant of the Red Outlaws smiled at that.

"Better than that we'll do. A trick now on old Vlewog!" he said cheerfully. "That boat, tied there to the rock—in that boat we'll go down with the tide and cast the ship off, and take her out under bare poles through the channel and anchor her beyond the bar. He'll have to live on her then to save her, till the wind shifts to let him handle her."

"*Ach y vi*," beamed Gwen. "There's the brains you have now. And we'll hurry down and see you do it. Crying we'll be, and shouting that you thieves are stealing the ship, while all the time it's laughing inside us we are."

"Better than that," returned the Red Bandit's blood. "In the boat you'll be, crying on us to hurry and tell poor Vlewog that the weathercock has changed again and wrong will be the wind for him now."

"*Dyn enwl*!" cried Nanno, from where she stole a peep round the corner. "It's back here he is already almost," and she ran straight into Shon's arms and began to push him toward the boat. "Fighting you'll be if you stop here, and sacked I'll be for your fighting. Come now."

"Sacked I'll be, too," cried Gwen, in sudden fright (or sudden fun, for you never know with a girl like Gwen), and straightway she began to bustle the red young man down to the boat.

To keep clear hold of what followed, read now that the southwest wind, blowing for a week past, had brought the usual rain, in the usual wasteful quantity, to cause the usual flood, and that flood, coming down the river, had this morning met the top of the spring tide. That spring tide was just at the slack, ready to turn and go out, at the very moment when these four bright persons pushed the boat off and sat down to the oars—in pairs.

They were wasting none of their chances, you'll notice.

And like that they were, in the cheering sunshine, when Mog Vlewog, hurrying back to the house to save the rations, and lunging round to look for the maids, happened to send an eye downstream and see them, halfway to the ship. He forgot the rations, forgot to swear, and just stood watching till he saw the boat reach the ship and all four of its crew go aboard. "Looking for me they are, I suppose," said Vlewog to himself. "I wonder why? I'll go and see."

As, however, Mog Vlewog had a mile to go to get to the ship, and as the flood was too high to let him follow the open trail cut out in the rocks of the shore, thus forcing him to take the way through the woods where he could see nothing of what was happening, we can't afford to wait for him if we don't intend to miss what the red man did meanwhile, more by token that there were already no less than half a dozen boats, hanging and swinging to the ship by their painters, when Gwen and the rest arrived.

The ship's boy had done his work well. He had sent word to the two men of the crew, and to the other boy who matched himself in the other watch at sea. Also he had sent a dawdling boy to summon Gitto Draed from his house beyond the point, while he himself should go aboard and get the cabin ready. And, as the way they all went aboard had a deal to do with what followed, read here the way they did it.

First, the boy from Vlewog's went along the shingle to where his mother's second cousin, John Gam, was loafing by his upturned boat, talking to his own first cousin and that cousin's brother-in-law, at the rate of five words in ten minutes, and there the boy asked his kinsman to put him aboard the ship. When they got to the ship the three men went aboard, in the usual idle way, so that made three men and a boy aboard.

The other boy was a son of Griffith of Tyddyn Rhys y Gadair, so no less than three of the Griffiths brought him aboard. Result, six men and two boys on board.

Next, the first man of the crew came aboard, and as he was young Bob Squat, all the young Morgans (three) came

with him, besides one Price. The one Price came because his sister was Bob Squat's sweetheart, and she would come aboard to see Bob off, which gave an excuse for Jane Jones, Price's sweetheart, to come, too. Total aboard, eleven men, two boys and two maids of Merioneth.

The second man of the crew was Deio Gardd Arthur, so Blodwen Williams, from Cae Isa' in Naut Iessyn, came because she was his sweetheart, and her sister came because she wanted to, too, and Lowry James came because she was that sister's chum and was glad Deio was going because she didn't like him. With these two last came their sweethearts, and the brother of one of them. Result, fifteen men, two boys and five maids of Merioneth.

To this total came the third and fourth men of the crew, and then arrived Gwen and her company, or the Red Man and his company, just as you prefer it, making nineteen men, two boys and seven maids of Merioneth, as well as also making *The Belles of Aberdovey* look wondrous like an emigrant ship loaded very much in excess of its register.

All this, however, was mere tinder till the Red Man put the spark to it. They were straining on their cables, bows up river, just a cable's length from shore. On that shore stood the Horseshoe Tavern staring at them with an open door. The Red Man came to the rail of the ship and bawled his call across. "Rum!" he called. "A keg of rum! Bring it aboard at once, Elystan Owen."

And Elystan Owen heard it, and sent the rum aboard by Jack Mortimer and his brother, making twenty-one of the lustiest lads in the whole of Aberdovey, all crowded aboard its biggest ship, with a keg of rum, seven wonderful maids, one Long Tom and six carronades, and Hairy Morgan coming.

But the Red Man did not worry. He sent the rum round three times and then, with his chuckling mellow laugh, cast loose the port bow mooring, so that the bow swung away to starboard, ready to whirl and go out, on top of the flood and tide, as soon as they slipped her

free of her right bower and then of her two stern moorings. And so they did and away she went, with four men in each of four boats, on bows and quarters, each boat with a line made fast to the ship, to keep her going head on and swinging right when they came to the windings of the channel that led out beyond the bar. The frolic was begun.

Now the channel is straight for quite a length before it suddenly turns and tries to steal out south between the bar and Borth y Ffynnon. And well along that straight the ship was, chuckling away on the racing flood, when Mog Vlewog emerged from the last of the wood and saw the fun in progress. You needn't believe that that is why the wood is not there now. Strong as his language was, there's still a limit to the powers of language, as well as to the powers of belief. They say that his language shriveled the leaves off, but that's a tale easier told than credited and, besides, it's always told by retired old mariners, and you know what their tales are.

You'll get a more reliable idea of his language when I tell you that, by the time he reached the shingle of the beach, he met Gitto Draed, who hadn't expected, and didn't want, to sail this morning, and yet whose bad temper vanished and left him smiling with pure delight before he had heard more than half a dozen words of his brother-in-law's outpouring.

"What a chaplain you'd have made if you'd been put to it—or a bosun's mate!" he said, with slow glee.

"If you don't get into that boat and come along, I'll knock you into it," returned Mog Vlewog, waking to action at that. "You two, too," he went on to Adda Saunders, the parish constable, and Evan Anthony, harbor master. So that's how they got afloat to follow.

Aboard the ship, Red Meilir saw that boat get afloat behind them, but he knew it was too late for it to stop them. Nothing could stop them now, till they cleared the tail of the bar and dropped anchor. Jack Mortimer was standing yonder on the fo'c'sl head, piloting the ship out. Jack Mortimer's brother,

having brought his fiddle aboard, was up on the poop, with the Red Man and all the maids, giving them a deuce of a merry little tune, all about haymaking and "larks," while Gwen and the rest of the maids sang the words, all except some words which they changed into nicer ones. The ship herself seemed to be up to the neck in the joke, by the way her forefoot and the water made little chuckling noises together as they raced along. And that way they went on, till they had traced out clear of the bar, and had let go the anchor near a mile outside, for so far a little towing by the boats assisted the power of the flood.

Then all hands came aboard, and thought they'd clear the decks and be dancing when Mog Vlewog arrived. And that's how they really realized that the guns were hard facts and could do a deal of damage, as barking their shins, for instance, for a start. The guns had been covered with tarpaulins, and when the tarpaulins were cast off, there stood the seven cannon, side by side along the middle of the deck, like a deck cargo, and guns they did look, too. It looked as if you could have taken one of those carronades with you on a voyage round the world and used it as a sort of ship's dustbin, to receive all the sweepings and the chippings of the ship, all the bones from the galley and the mislaid things from the deck, such as an odd paint pot or two, the carpenter's broadaxe, the bosun's marlinspike, the wrist and leg irons from the lazaret, and so forth; and then, coming home again, you could meet the enemy's line of battle and fire that gun at him, and what you didn't kill him with you'd smother him with, and so sail calmly into port, with the dustbin gun quite ready to begin the voyage over again.

"*Dyn!*" said Red Meilir, as he surveyed the array. "Pirates it do look like we are, whatever."

Then Mog Vlewog came aboard, and his three after him.

If you think he was using language—you know—when he threw his leg over the rail and stood up on his own deck, well, he wasn't. He couldn't think of

any language, Welsh or English, to fit the case. And while he stood and glared round, and while Gwen and the other maids hid behind the young men, the Red Bandit smiled mellowly on Mog and did it. "Clever we are, aren't we?" he said, as he came forward. "We thought you'd be so afraid of the flood and the tide that we'd best bring the ship out for you, to give you a clear start. And there's the fiddle, and here's rum. Have a good one with us; I'm paying," and he held out a beaker of rum, with a smile like a father.

Mog glared once at him and once at the rum, and then a sudden thought seemed to take him. A chill smile came into his face, like the grin on the face of a man who has fallen into a very cold pond and has scrambled out under the interested eyes of the warm and dry spectators. He did not say a word, but just stalked up onto the poop, cast one eye up at the streamer at the fore truck, saw that the wind had shifted a full two points north of west, and was even flapping onto nor'west by west, and his face hardened into its best deep sea manner. "Stand by the jibs and fores'l," he shouted. "Gitto! Man the capstan and get that anchor up. Lively now, all! Shake out the jibs and fores'l, and round with that capstan! This ship can't ride here. We'll have to work her down to Aberystwyth or Aberaeron. Lively all!"

Nanno squealed. "Oh, *dyn arwyl!* Take me back to shore, you Mog Vlewog! Oh, Shon *bach*, don't let him take me out on the old sea in this thing! Don't!"

Shon *bach* started toward Mog Vlewog, but the parish constable and the harbor master barred his way. "Look you, Shon *bach*," said the constable. "At sea you are now, man, and the law on you to shoot you he has, and you to be hanged for it if you say a word against it. Not on land you are now, remember."

At that Nanno squealed again, and threw her arms round Shon *bach*. "Oh, don't be getting hanged for me now. Shoni! Don't!" she cried, while Gwen looked at Red Meilir with a very asking

eye. But both that man and all the rest, except the regular crew, seemed to see only the finest of fun in the order, and they all fell to with a will, laughing and shouting with delight.

"Ah, look you, Gwen *bach*," said Meilir insinuatingly. "He daren't play the fool while it's on board all you maids are. Just his fun it is. Cheer up," and he kissed her, and got a ringing smack on the ear for it.

By way of return, he wound a long arm round the shoulder of Shon *bach* and began to wheedle him. "Hoi, Shoni, now; quiet now, Shoni! It's him will be the fool if he takes us all down to Aberaeron. Won't we eat all the provand on board in the two meals before he gets us ashore? Besides, won't he be hard and fast on Sarn Wallog in ten minutes, if he tries it? Get a handspike and go round the caps'an now."

"I'd sooner get a handspike and go round Mog Vlewog," rumbled Shon, as the long arm led him away.

But if any of the other twenty-four men on board thought that Mog Vlewog did not know what he was doing, they did not know Mog Vlewog, that was all. He knew that Sarn Wallog (one of the long moraines that run out into Cardigan Bay) would be no danger for another hour yet, in a tide like that. He even knew that the lee shore was hardly a lee shore at all, with the wind swinging as it was, and the ship sailing as close up as he knew she could. And of all the things on this earth that Mog was sure of, he was surest as to the sailing of that ship. He had stayed at home from sea to work on the building of her himself. He had had a hand in the choosing, shaping and fitting of every timber in her, from keel to topmast. He'd argue with her, and bully her, and coax her as if she were his wife, and he was going to do any or all of those three things now, in getting her away from that anchorage and down to Aberaeron, to set those very clever persons ashore and make them walk foolish home.

So up came the anchor, and flat went the sails against the wind, as hard up as

left a bare hair's breadth between that and throwing her into the wind altogether.

Well, the merry lads aboard made up their minds that this was the finest day they'd had a chance of since New Year, and what with the rum and the fiddle and the girls, you'd have thought it was the fair at Dolgelly or Machynlleth, for laughing and kissing and hugging in corners, till they were well away from the anchorage by the Aberdovey bar. And only when they noticed that Gitto Draed kept staring and staring at a great brig to westward, bowling along down wind with everything drawing, did they begin to think that there could be anything else but jollity aboard that ship, clean down to Aberaeron.

What with the crew, and what with the others, there were no less than seven men of them that had served in the King's navee, including the harbor master and the constable, and most of them had the scars to show for it. It was six of them now, watching the seventh, Gitto Draed, how hard and harder he stared at that brig—it was those six began to be uneasy. And when at last Gitto turned to Mog Vlewog and said, "That brig's no trader; she wasn't built for cargo carrying," they all endorsed Mog's grimly spoken answer.

"For speed she was built—and speed at sea mean's robbing and burning. Belike that's Mr. Jones."

"Ay, ay!" returned Gitto, rousingly. "Paul Jones it'll be. But if we'll wreck this ship, we can wreck him, too, and finish him with that."

Mog Vlewog's bristles went up in a breath, but it wasn't his answer that bedithered Gitto Draed. Gwen had heard that one word, "wreck" like a trumpet. Round she flew on the mate. "Wreck this ship! And get me all wet! And then walk twelve miles home all draggletailed! You, Gitto Draed, you let me catch you, that's all! You'll see what! Can't you fight? Aren't you a man at all?"

Gitto stared—and then he grinned. "Fight! That ship's full of men and full of guns!" he said.

"And so's this ship full of men and

full of guns!" retorted Gwen. "There isn't room to turn on this ship for men and guns—if they *are* men!"

"And the guns are not even shipped to stations for fighting—there's hardly room to rig them for fighting," returned Gitto hotly.

"If the men were all right, the guns are," retorted Gwen again.

"I tell you, that ship's four times as big as this," returned Gitto, still more hotly. "Her guns are all ready for action, and she's full of men all armed, over a hundred."

"Yes, they are men, and so the guns are ready for action," retorted headlong Gwen again.

It was then that the Red Man joined in and settled things. "Ah, Gwen, *cariad!* The guns—don't worry. Placing them we are already—look!" and he flung back the tarpaulin from the nearest gun, the Long Tom, as it happened. "Come, lads *bach*," he cried to the rest. "We'll make a man o' war of this ship in two shakes of a lamb's tail."

Gitto Draed and Mog Vlewog did not interfere, as the men began to skip lively round the guns, rigging and reeving. They two were too busy with real things to bother about nonsense like that. "Look you," said Mog downrightly. "It's not wrecking this ship I'll be. I worked and scraped and saved for her. I'll not be a beggar again. Sink first, I will."

"Sink first, sink last; sink you will, first or last," retorted Gitto.

"Sink I will, then," returned Mog grimly.

"If you do, I'll scratch your eyes out," put in Gwen furiously.

The two men wasted no words on her. They were close on Aberystwyth now, with its ruined castle overlooking the waves. Both men stared hard at the castle. "If that castle weren't a Quaker!" rumbled Mog.

"Or if those two rivers weren't in flood!" chimed in Gitto. "As it is, we could never get this ship into the harbor till the tide made."

"And Paul Jones will be on us in two turns of a spinning wheel," put in Gwen again, stamping her foot.

"It's this deep water, drawing right into the edge of the shore, that spoils us," went on Mog Vlewog. "He can come as close in as we can. There isn't a reef or a bank to break him on, from here to Strumble Head."

"If only we could get to Aberaeron first!" despaired Gitto. "We could hold right into the harbor there, and blow his boats out of the water if he tried to cut us out."

"If only we could get to heaven first, the devil couldn't cut us out," jibed Mog Vlewog ferociously. "It'll be all settled before we're dropping Aberystwyth astern."

But nobody seemed to be paying any attention to Mog and Gitto. All the men, under the leadership of Red Meilir, and under the direction of the six who had served, were busy shipping the guns to their places. The Long Tom was got up on the poop. The carronades were so disposed as to fire over the low starboard rail, though not all at once in one broadside, for fear of heeling her over. Three at a time were to be the broadside, and each of the guns was covered with a careless-looking tarpaulin, which hid it completely. And the loads of grape shot and short lengths of chain and iron bolts half a yard long which were jammed into those carronades were something to make you turn pale when they'd be firing them, if it ever should come to that.

Meanwhile, Red Meilir laid half a dozen pokers of sorts to heat in the galley fire, while the crew broke the arm-racks and served out the six brass blunderbusses, six cutlasses and twelve pistols.

And all the time that this loading and arming was going on, the seven maids stood along the weather rail, holding shawls or pieces of tarpaulins to hide what was being done from the spyglass of Mr. Paul Jones yonder, on that brig that was growing so big at every minute. Gwen was captain of the maids, as well as roweller in chief of all hands generally.

Paul Jones—if it were Paul Jones in that brig—knew that coast, by the look of things. He must have sailed it in his

boyhood, from his home on the Solway Firth, for he kept his course to cut off the schooner, as if he knew he'd have water enough to wear round into the wind, or bottom enough to anchor well, clean into the lip of the coast.

Mog Vlewog didn't seem to be noticing Paul Jones and his brig, nor Gwen and her crew. He didn't seem to be watching anything but his own sails and the way they drew, but when Gwen spoke up at last, demanding what he intended to do—well, it was still Mog Vlewog that answered. "What will I do but the thing I told you I'd do when we slung our hook from Aberdovey bar? Down to Aberaeron I'm sailing this ship, to drop that hook again there. If Paul Jones interferes—well, I'm still sailing this ship to Aberaeron—you people can do what you like. You came aboard without the leave of me. Look after yourselves you must, without the help of me."

"And when that great big beast begins to shoot at us!" demanded Gwen, on her very topmost stretch of voice and fire and figure.

"Your job that is," was all Mog Vlewog answered to that. "And you mustn't speak to the man at the helm, either," he finished.

"You wait till that Paul Jones speaks to you!" retorted Gwen fiercely.

"If he comes aboard and speaks, then—we'll see," retorted Mog, screwing his eye still tighter on that faintest little flicker running in his flying jib, so close he was to overdoing it and shoving her, the ship, into the wind altogether. But it was a snickering, flickering, yawing and flawing sort of a wind, anyhow, at best. It needed Mog at that helm.

Then Gitto Draed shut his mind hard down. "Right now, Mog," he cried, for all to hear. "On that line you keep her—just that straight streak down for Aberaeron, sink or swim, and we'll fight it out on that. We've got seven guns to a broadside. He can't have any more. We're lower and less to hit than he is, and less spars and rigging to cut loose and smother us all, ship and men together. Right, we'll fight!"

"Oh, now; hear that now, somebody,

do," cried Gwen sarcastically. "Gitto Draed will fight now, look you everybody."

Gitto turned a fierce eye on Gwen, but Red Meilir was the smiling peacemaker. "Ah, now, Gitto *bach*. Not fight yet. Astonish him first we will. Astonish him so he won't get over it in time to fight."

"How?" demanded Gitto ferociously.

But the Red Bandit's blood would not be bristled. He just kept on smiling mellowly and shaking his head. "You'll see. Planned it all, we have. Wait you now."

Gitto cocked his astonished eye at the harbor master. But the harbor master was evidently in the secret, too, for he nodded back most confidently. "If we have any chance at all, this is the chance," he said. "You'll see." At present, the only sign of a plan was that all the men but one or two were lying flat out of sight.

Then wisdom dawned in Gitto's eye. A grin stole over his face, like a tide over a sandbank. He spat on his hand, took a fresh grip of his cutlass and whistled it round his head. Then he winked, solemnly winked, at Gwen. "I see," he said. "Boarders you seven maids are. Boarding that brig you'll be, and you want me to lead you. But I won't. Legging you up I'll be instead."

Then he ran—just in time, laughing as he hadn't laughed in a lifetime.

Gwen did not follow. She kept hold of her dignity and turned back to the rail, and just as she did so—"Wow!" came a great squeal from all seven maids in unison, for a flash and a bang and a smoke and a roar from the brig's bow-chaser broke all fun from everything, and made the maids drop down on deck, with their hands to their ears and their elbows to their eyes, and long-drawn cries of "*Shoni bach!*" and "*Evan bach!*" and so forth, each calling on her true love for help now—all except Gwen. She couldn't well cry for Red Meilir, for fear he'd be proud, so soon.

Nevertheless, he did put his hand on her head, but when she looked up she saw that he, like Gitto Draed and the harbor master, the only other two stand-

ing, was looking with craned neck at the brig, the smile on his face still mellow, though the smile on Gitto's face was become a steely glitter. Only Mog Vlewog took no notice. He just kept his eye on his canvas and minded his steering.

Gwen didn't know that the first shot was merely a summons to heave to. She was wondering how soon they were going to sink. Then—"Boom!"—she heard another shot, and—"Bang!"—came another, this time sending a shot screaming across just over her head, she was sure. Her fright turned to fury at these smiling fools of men. "Shoot! Why don't you shoot our guns off?" she cried, and then—"Woah!" she screamed, and collapsed as another shot came so near that the wind of it tore the hat from the still smiling Red Man.

But, as she collapsed and hid her eyes, she remembered the way the wind of the shot had jerked Red Meilir's handsome head aside, and, as the next shot came whistling across, she could stand no more of it. Up she jumped, and began to tug at her fellow maids. "Up you get! We'll shoot!" she cried. "Up now! We'll show these men, as they call themselves! *Men!* Hens they are!"

Nanno jumped up, but the rest might have stayed there yet, if it weren't that Meilir and the harbor master both began to drag them to their feet, with cries of "Up now! Up! Show yourselves! Show yourselves! Wave your shawls now! Up!"

Then they all jumped up in a flare, between deadly fear and glaring fury, and began to wave their shawls at that brig and to cry out names and—blessings!—at Paul Jones and his men, in such a hullabaloo, from rail and poop and fo'c'sle head, that Paul Jones must have thought that *The Belles of Aberdovey* was loaded down, not with belles of Aberdovey, but belles from Bedlam. Which was precisely what the Red Man aimed at.

The effect was sure. The brig was so near by now that all hands aboard her could see this crowd of women, as it seemed, going frantic on the schooner, and though a man may be a pirate—or

a patriot, according as you look at Paul Jones—yet he rather wants to capture them to kill pretty maids wherever he comes across them. And so here. No matter what nations they were that were serving under Jones, on his way to the raid on Carrickfergus, yet they held their matches away from their guns as their wide-winged craft came bowling along, to lay the schooner aboard if nothing else would stop her.

Whether Paul Jones had any guess of the game Mog Vlewog was suddenly playing at the helm, stealing room and retarding speed, ready for the moment he'd need both, the tale does not depone. At any rate, it made no difference to the crowd of sail the brig still bore; sprits'l, stuns'l, skyscrapers and all, and now that they could see the maids, and therefore dared not fire their guns, the men of the brig had no other hope of getting the schooner except by grappling her.

Then, at musket range, the men on the schooner's deck could no longer be hidden, and the men on the brig began to shout and point and lay to their guns. "Down, you maids!" yelled Meilir, in a voice like battle itself. "Up, you men!" and in a twinkling all the maids were tumbling down below hatches and all the men were at the guns, tarpaulins off, sights laid, pokers ready and every line taut. One hurried shot that came from the brig, too high as she rose on the swell, seemed to be the signal for the schooner's guns, and out they roared, three carronades, with such a deafening earthquake crash as seemed to paralyze the wind itself, and then Meilir, Gitto and the harbor master, each acting as captain of a carronade, were roaring to their men to run out the other three through the smother of smoke and—"Crash!"—out roared a repetition of the earthquake, making the schooner wallow and shiver as Mog held her up to it, still watching his sails only: still sticking to his own job.

Gitto stuck to his job, too—fighting. Up to the Long Tom on the poop he jumped, laid it and fired it, and that was the shot that settled things. The six carronades, loaded like six junk shops with all manner of old iron, had been bad

enough, bringing down a muck of both running and standing rigging to smother the choked brig's decks, but now the Long Tom, carefully aimed at the brig's foremast, had jammed its great round shot home into the mainmast. Down crashed the whole center of the brig's wings and power—melancholy, melancholy to see!

But it is one man, always, that counts in a close quarter fight, and never was a better man at that than this same stout Paul Jones. As the crippled brig, smothered and blinded, began to fall away, Paul Jones's voice could be heard roaring high over all; roaring for some to cut away this and that wreckage, and others to clear this and that gun. His voice was so furious and compelling that even Gwen, down below, heard it and felt sure that that horrible man would conquer them yet, some way, if somebody didn't stop him. And when she looked round the deck, all these foolish men seemed to be taking no notice, but just went on skipping about, loading the cannons again, and seeming interested in nothing else, while as to Mog Vlewog, he was actually smiling, by the spread of his beard, as he did something to the helm which made the schooner wheel and leap ahead like a horse almost.

She looked at the brig, and found they were passing it close under its jibboom, and on its other bow she saw Paul Jones himself jump to the rail and look at them, still roaring orders, and lifting a grappling iron in his own hands, to throw and make them fast after all, and let his boarders win. It was that that put the match to her powder.

Up on deck she jumped. The only thing to hand was a ship's mop, broken short off close up to the head. It was black from sponging out a carronade, but that made no matter. Up she grabbed it, to the rail she ran with it, and with all her might she flung it at Admiral Paul Jones.

And she hit. Never mind the rule; this was the exception apparently; she hit him right in the mouth, to judge by the splutter that came where the roar had been. And at that she felt sorry, but in a minute more she was glad, for

Admiral Paul Jones jumped down off the fo'c'sle head to swill his mouth in a bucket on deck, and did it just in time to save his life from that horrible Gitto Draed and Red Meilir and the rest, where they roared away with their great carronades and swept away every man standing where Paul Jones had been on that fo'c'sle head. And by the time Paul Jones got back on that fo'c'sle head, the rest of the carronades had been laid to sweep the brig further along, so that he escaped again—which every right-minded girl will be glad of, for he was a wonderful fighter.

Well, and then Mog Vlewog had his innings, as the schooner drew away from the disabled brig. There was more shooting, but not much killing, as far as the tale makes out, for the maids were kept below, and the men laid close in quarters, except Gitto and Meilir and the harbor master and the parish constable and another or two who would man the Long Tom, and except Mog Vlewog, who stayed at the helm and rumbled out his triumph in that Aberdovey song which tells how a young sailor came home to marry his sweetheart, and found her dead, so he went to the wars and got killed. It is a great song with Aberdovey seamen and even farther around the bay.

And that's what made Red Meilir of Bryngwyn take to the sea and turn rover. If that's what you could get at sea;

great, hellion, roaring, battling encounters like that, guns going and sails drawing and masts crashing, why—the land be blowed; who'd stay on land after that? So Gwen had to hide her mind and grow pinched and white between tears and temper, while Meilir sold everything he had and built a barque on the slips there by Gardd Arthur; a barque that never was matched for strength and speed, as the tale tells; a barque that put to sea with only the six great carronades and one Long Tom that we know of, and a crew of something like fifty, gathered from everywhere.

And if this tale were the tale of all that happened, in far seas and near oceans, by battle and wreck, by fortune and ill hap, to that ship and its crew, it would be a tale of wonderful length, as well as of wonderful happenings, before it came to the day when Red Meilir drew home again at last, his left sleeve empty and pinned across his breast, a great broad scar beginning just below his right temple and finishing below his breast, and in his breast a heart that was satisfied of all else in the world at last, except Gwen; Gwen that forgave him because she couldn't help it; Gwen that forgave him because she'd been praying night and day for all these years that he'd come back to her some day; Gwen that just looked once in his eyes and saw that he loved her and cared for nothing else in the world.



FRANK

By Witter Bynner

THE neighbors and the pastor came,
And only Frank away;
And they were quiet, they were kind,
A month ago today.

He lay beside me thirty years
And now lies under snow,
And over snow my neighbors drive
And whistle as they go.

VARIATIONS ON A CLASSIC THEME

By Louis Untermeyer

(Horace's famous "Integer Vitæ" rendered in a few of Browning's manners.)

THIS is the tale:
Friend, you shall know the right and the wrong of it.
Listen, before old Sirius grows pale
And the tang leaves the ale—
For (saith the poet) all things have an end;
Even beauty must fail,
The rapture and song of it . . .
Here, to be brief, is the short and the long of it—
Listen, my friend.

Virtue, I hold, is the raiment to travel in.
Fuscus, my friend, if you're swaddled in virtue,
Never a spearhead, a sword or a javelin,
No, not an arrow that's poisoned can hurt you.
Virtue is more than a shield or a stirrup;
Virtue's the stuff—it will shock sloth and rasp ease,
Even in lands where the lazy Hydaspes
Ambles along like a curious syrup;
Aye, and in climes where the voice is as raucous as
Winds in the barren and harborless Caucasus.
Fuscus, the man who is guiltless is fearless,
He's of the chosen, the purple, the peerless—
What does he care for a frown more, a cheer less?
Bearing the falchion of Truth—

But I bore you—
Plague take all pedantry! Learning what stuff is it . . .
Weighty and erudite preambles—*Sufficit!*
Here you shall have only facts set before you;
Told in my harsh but imperative accents.
(Music in which the musician must pack sense;
And yet with the rhyme like an intricate minuet,
To caution the soul that, I warrant, is in you yet.)

One day I went wandering casually;
The sky was a deep lapis lazuli;
The poplars were rustling with merriment,
As (half in a burst, half experiment)
I sang, without fear or apology,
Of honor, of love—and of Lalage . . .

Well, as I sang, thinking no whit of harm,
I walked along—when . . . zooks, before me sprang

A wolf, a monster with a head like Death's,
 As—how d'ye call—Apulia does not rear,
 Or Juba, land that's nursing mother to lions,
 Never gave birth to . . . how my heart flew up!
 Gr-r-r—he stood growling in my very path—
 Yet on I sang—my voice and conscience clear.
 With that the beast retreats, gives way, runs off;
 And I am left alone, unscratched, unscathed.
 And so, singing of Lalage, I go—
 Lalage, her sweet prattle, sweeter laughter . . .
 Now, let us understand the matter, sift the thing;
 Here, in a nutshell is the crux of it:
 Old Euclid teaches (ha, d'ye note the dawn?)
 That—what, you must be going?
 Well, good night . . .

II

(Being what Poe would have done with it.)

It was midnight, the month was November;
 The skies they were cheerless and cold,
 The forest was trembling and old;
 And my heart it was gray, I remember,
 As I walked through the hyaline wold.
 The moon was a perishing ember,
 The heavens were ashen and cold.

It was midnight, and so to restore me
 To laughter and solace from pain,
 I sang and the melody bore me
 To Israfil's bosom again,
 To the regions enchanted again;
 I felt the dim beauty flow o'er me,
 The fever of living seemed vain
 And death but a shadow of pain.
 And I sang though a wolf stood before me.

I sang of the terrors titanic,
 Of ghouls and the breath of the tomb,
 Of scoriac floods and volcanic,
 Of Helen, Lenore, Ulalume,
 Of devils from hell free,
 Of bells in the belfry,
 Of the banging and the clanging as they boom,
 boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom—
 I sang of these things—and in panic
 The wolf disappeared in the gloom—
 He left me alone in the gloom!

III

(How Austin Dobson would have turned it into a rondeau.)

AN upright man need never dread
 The blows of Fate; he who has led
 A blameless life is safer far
 Than kings in frowning castles are,
 For he is armed with Truth instead.

Once as I roamed with careless tread,
A wolf who heard me turned and fled—
He felt that I was, more than czar,
An upright man.

So when the last refrain is said
Above my narrow, rose-strewn bed,
Say not, "He worshiped flower and star";
Say not, "He loved *sans* let or bar";
But write these words above my head:
"An upright man."

IV

(*As Shakespeare might have soliloquized upon it.*)

THE quality of virtue is not strained;
It falleth gently on the upright soul
And clothes the spirit with a suit of mail.
The honest man with neither bow nor shield,
Envenomed arrows, daggers, javelins,
Can stand unarmed against a sea of troubles
And, by opposing, end them . . . Whether he walk
Beside the huge and multitudinous waves,
Or though unharbored Caucasus he roam,
Nothing shall lift its great abhorrent head
And freeze the quivering marrow in his bones.
There's a divinity doth hedge a man
Who feareth naught, rough-hew him how you will.
Why, I have seen this wonder come to pass,
As I went singing lately through a wood
A wolf all teeth, a wolf of savage hate,
A wolf, whose every movement was a threat,
Sprang at me snarling, like the winds of March . . .
But king-becoming graces soothe the beasts
And music charms them with her silver sound;
So on I went unchecked by grovelling fear.

V

(*The kind of "Frivolous Fable" Guy Wetmore Carryl would have made of it.*)

BENEATH a wood's umbrageous limbs,
Where leaves and beasts a-plenty lay,
A Latin bard went singing hymns
Of where "*festina lente*" lay.
Unarmed, unbowed, he walked along—
His ardor and his voice were strong,
And all the forest heard his song,
His "*dolce far niente*" lay.

Gaily he sang of love—when lo,
A savage wolf confronted him;
The creature looked and eyed him so,
It looked as if it wanted him.
But Horace (thus he leaped to fame),
Acting as though the beast were tame,
Sang, "Nice old doggie—what's your name?"
In short, it never daunted him.

THE SMART SET

And, like a skillful amateur,
 He jumped an octave tastily.
 The wolf, although no connoisseur,
 Went off a little space till he
 Observed that Horace loved to dwell
 On all the trills and high notes—well,
 The beast gave one reproachful yell
 And left the poet—hastily!

The Moral: Every student will
 Applaud the beast with such a vim;
 They, too, of Horace get their fill
 Instead of just a touch of him.
 The wolf, when Horace would not cease,
 Could get no piece, howe'er obese—
 And since he gave the wolf no peace
 The wolf had far too much of him.

VI

(As a disciple of "imagiste" verse, futurist painting and post-impressionist prose
 would translate it.)

LISTEN,
 Aristius Fuscus,
 it is not the quiver
 bursting with arrows,
 nor sudden spears,
 nor certainly the warmth of
 confident armor
 that shields
 a man . . .

Here is a wood
 full of blue winds
 and dead symbols;
 full of sick sounds
 and invisible flowers
 why should I tremble

Now let me sing of you,
 plangent and conquering
 with furious hair,
 and fluent caresses . . .
 why should I tremble,
 and stammer
 like moonlight
 caught in black branches

Now like a fish
 in the net of tomorrow,
 let my heart batten
 on the thought of your face;
 let my soul feed
 on the red rind of passion,
 softly . . . exulting!

Let me remember
climate and javelins,
laughter and Lalage,
Virtue and wolves
and so forth . . .

Et cetera

VII

(*A ballad that might have resulted had Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Oscar Wilde collaborated upon it.*)

THE wind is weary, the world is wan;
(*Oh, lone, lank lilies and long, lean loves.*)
My shield is shed, life's armour is gone—
And Virtue is all that I have on.

(*My lily,*
My lissome lily, my languid love.)

Full thirteen days have I walked with woe,
(*Oh dear, dead days and divine desires.*)
Yet wolves may follow where'er I go,
But nothing shall stop my songs' sweet flow.

(*My lily,*
My love, my delirious, dark desire.)

The night is wistful and wide and wan,
(*Oh, limpid lily, oh, labial love—*

CONTINUE AND REPEAT AD. LIB. AD. INFIN. . . .

VIII

(*The sort of story it might have suggested to George Bronson-Howard, who would have called it "The Pink Pleonasm."*)

Consider the ant—unlovely, patient, indomitable. It has no wings, no alluring color, no temperament, it takes no part in the night life of the flowers. It is a member of the bourgeoisie, a plodder, a virtuous citizen. And it founds civilizations, it builds vast subterranean cities, its prowess astounds the stars.

Consider the man—unlovely, impatient, indomitable. Like the ant he has no wings, but his desire is that of the butterfly. Sometimes, indeed, he shuts himself in with his soul, and then he becomes a member of the bourgeoisie, a plodder, a virtuous citizen. And Virtue—stronger than shields or javelins—Virtue (and this is Satan's best advertisement) is its own reward.

II

Lalage Laffter knew her New York. She had not been one of its brilliant ephemera for nothing. Like most of Broadway's astonishing butterflies, she had been, until very recently, the drabdest of moths. She could count on two fingers of her exquisitely manicured hand the years since she had emerged from the chrysalis—and Rockville Center had been her cocoon. Far from discouraging her, the thought of her prosy origin and her even prosier struggles was her constant stimulus. All the world's great beauties—Cleopatra, Ninon de l'Enclos, Frankie Bailey, Louise de la Valliere, the Cherry Sisters, Mary MacLane—these, she remembered, were all "small town" girls. Sappho had been a denizen of Lesbos—a village unknown to a single habitué of the now defunct but once famous Bishop's, or the equally renowned and more exclusive Fitz-Arlton. So Lalage never wept over

memories of Rockville Center. She was a woman with a purpose; she had come to New York to succeed. Men were the rungs on which she determined to climb. . . . It was in the second year of her ascent that she stumbled on Quintus H. Flaccus.

III

Quintus H. Flaccus, called "Horace" by his intimates, was the son of a wealthy box manufacturer; he was also an exceedingly minor poet. He could be characterized best by stating that he looked exactly like his name. To fill out the picture, it may be written that he described himself as a "man's man"—and deceived no one but Q. H. F. . . . Add to this the knowledge that he wore blue leather shoes, a rapt air and a wrist watch; spoke in a falsetto voice of "red blood and guts"; drank dark beer in public, *anisette* in private, and read Bergson in the original—and you have his full-sized portrait, done in oils and handsomely framed in a shadow box. His meeting with Lalage had been even more than casual. It was at one of those Wednesday afternoon, incense-burning meetings at Arrigo Wolff's—attended by artistic persons and actors, millionaires, jewelry salesmen and all manner of folk who talked in capital letters, whose minds were bound roycrofty and who had limp-leather souls. The air was heavy with smoke and epigrams. T. Mæcenas Smith, the literary lawyer, introduced her; and the trio stood, juggling small talk and smaller teacups, while Lalage angled carefully for her first big catch. Her erudition (obtained entirely from the literary section of the *New York Times*) astonished Horace, and when she praised his reading from his projected drama ("Menelaus at Troy—a Tragedy in Five Acts") he knew he had met the one woman who understood him. Which was absolutely true. She did.

IV

The following year Lalage accepted a necklace, a position with Meadow's "Millionaire Beauty Chorus" and a latchkey from Horace in rapid succession. She was still climbing; soon she would be able to spring up the ladder unassisted. But for the present she continued to flatter Horace and encourage the guarded admiration of T. Mæcenas Smith. "Why," she asked the latter, at one of the trio's Sunday night suppers in Horace's bijou apartments, "why do you come so often to that miserable burlesque of ours? "Surely," she laughed, "there's little there to attract your eminently legal mind." Mæcenas chuckled. "Quite the contrary, my dear Lalage; a comic opera, particularly to the lawyer, is altogether a case of '*Legs justitia*.'" "A rotten pun," scowled Horace; "and speaking of rottenness, I'm through with that bunch at Wolff's." "Really!" said Lalage, a shade too carelessly. "And why?" "Well, dear, you remember that walking party over at the Palisades last Saturday? We were tramping through the woods, and I began to recite some of the songs from my forthcoming 'Necrophilia and Other Poems.' Would you believe it, that fellow Wolff actually walked away. . . . I suppose my stuff was too much for a conventional and crude product like him." "Now, dear," interposed Lalage, "don't be hard on the boy; he's a bit queer, but a good sort—eh, Mæcenas?" And Mæcenas nodded cynically, and made a mental note.

V

Three months later Lalage Laffter was starred in "The Hounds of Spring"—stage settings and costumes by the newly arrived and popular "pointillist," Arrigo Wolff. Within a year Lalage, an international figure, left Horace and America. Wolff left on the same steamer. Two weeks later Horace became a misogynist, a scorner of Broadway, a leader of White Slave crusades. His letters against turkey trotting, the salacity of the stage and "our depraved sex literature" filled many columns in the public prints. He organized the Rialto Purity League, Branch I. He was a man with a purpose. He was a virtuous citizen.

THE HOME TRAIL

By William Slavens McNutt

ED an' me, we didn't care a lot. Not us. Ed he's been in Alaska some fifteen year, an' he's one o' them birds that's right unhappy when he's "outside" with money in his kick. He's a Sourdough pure an' simple. His happiness an' all he wants lays on the trails, in the camps an' on lonely prospects.

Let Ed go double for me. I ain't been in the land as long as him, but the lure of it, she sure had me. Had me right.

If I ever had struck it rich, which I never did (an' I've busted my fool back sinkin' shafts alongside claims where men took out millions), I'd o' been like Ed an' a thousan' an' one others that's got the witchery o' the Northland in their blood. I'd o' gone outside an' soaked myself in champagne till I was busted, an' then back to the Yukon for mine an' right glad to get there.

I'd be like the guy Bob Service wrote about in that piece o' his: that guy that was outside with a roll an' got wine an' dined an' girlred till he was plumb nuts, an' he says, "Thank God, when I'm skinned to a finish, I'll pike to the Yukon again."

That was Ed an' that was me; but Curly Van Ameringe, he was some different. Curly he had a wife back East, an' a wife she puts a different telescope up to a man's eyes for him to look at life through. A wife sure does. Leastwise to a man that takes this wife stuff serious. I never did personal, but some do. Yuh know the kind. Them kind that'd rather have a wife, all leather-skinned an' blear-eyed an' sick to death than the classiest-lookin' young chicken that ever paraded.

Funny about some that way, ain't it? But some are built that way. I reckon

maybe folks like that are real nice people. They're mostly plumb fools, but all nice people are plumb fools, ain't they? All I ever knew was.

The wise guys ain't worth the powder to blow 'em to the hell they're headed for; but the boobs— Say, if they is anything in this heaven an' hell stuff, lots o' the boobs in this world are goin' to have an awful good time in eternity, sittin' up there on a pink cloud with their feet hangin' over, laughin' at us wise guys swimmin' in pitch down below. They are, believe me. O' course if they ain't nothin' but what we jam out o' this world, why then the boobs— Well, I was goin' to tell yuh.

Ed an' Curly an' me, we'd been prospectin' together goin' on four year. Four year—that ain't long when you're ramblin' round with nothin' on your mind but your hair, but when yuh got a wife, listen, kid, I reckon puttin' in eternity won't be nothin' new to a guy that's done that; not to one o' them boob guys I'm speakin' of, that's nuts over this wife stuff. No, sir!

Curly he was one o' them people.

Curly he hadn't said a whole lot about this wife o' his in the four years we'd been mushin' around the country with him. Not a lot. We knowed he had one back in Philadelphia an' that was about all. He got letters from her some, an' after one come we got so's we didn't look to hear no word out o' him for some days. He was right silent after he got one o' them letters. I caught him sometimes goin' to sleep in his blankets with 'em jammed up against his cheek; an' once when I picked one up he'd dropped in the tent I couldn't help seein' it was all over yellow blotches.

He wasn't no cryin' man either, Curly wasn't. Not him. I see him slip his foot into boilin' muck one winter day when he was workin' a shaft on a lay up on Gold Crick. It boiled that foot o' his clean to the bone an' he never whimpered. Not him. No, sir!

But he was a boob on this wife stuff, see? A plumb boob.

We stake this claim on Caribou in the Johnson country in the big rush o'— She sure did look good. Thirty an' forty cents to the pan she run in places, an' we digs a drain ditch to dry up the crick bed where we was sluicin', puts in our boxes an' hops to it.

We make money, I'm sayin'. We're all plumb millionaires for a long time, takin' out two an' three hundred dollars some days, an' plannin' on puttin' in a dredge the next year to make a regular clean-up.

Oh, she was some pay streak while she lasted, but she didn't last. It's come July when we work out o' the pocket.

Ed he's pannin' out the clean-up one night, an' he looks up with his face right white. "Not to put a smudge on the fires o' joy, none," he says, "I'm tellin' yuh that this dirt don't assay an ounce to a Ioway farm section."

He's right. Caribou, she's a pockety damn crick both ways from discovery, an' today's minin' king, that's workin' on her, is comin' past your camp tomorrow with his pack on, panhandlin' the dough gods.

That's the way Caribou run, an' we was in bad with the rest. We panned the ground from hell to breakfast both ways from our cut, but they's nothin' doin'. Not a color. We'd had a rich pocket an' we'd plum worked it out.

We wasn't busted at that. We had some three thousan' apiece out o' it, but three thousan'— Stop makin' me laugh. Three thousan' ain't bean money to a man that's played that Alaska game. No!

A guy can bank up that much in the States. Yuh go up there an' yuh ante your life an' your time an' yuh win out a three-thousan' pot— Say, that little dab ain't the price of your ante. No. That's nothin' more'n a bum grubstake

to strike for the main chance again. That's all.

Well, they's three months o' prospectin' weather left, an' when we find we're bunked we figure on hikin' into the hills on the look again.

As I'm sayin', me an' Ed, we don't care a lot. Curly he's right sad about it, though. It clean hurt me to see the way he went an' took it. Didn't beef none, or nothin' like that, but he just kind o' slimps up like a guy does when he's shot bad. You've seen 'em. One minute they're a good full-blooded man an' then bang goes the gat, an' they're nothin' but an awful wrinkled-up suit o' clothes with somethin' sick an' limp inside of 'em. Sure! Yuh know how they look.

That's the way Curly was. All plumb crumpled up. He'd been figurin' on gettin' out in the fall an' goin' back to this wife o' his with a bankroll that'd bring out the lodge band playin' "Hail the Conquerin' Hero Comes." An' here he was down somewhere near where he started in.

We're sittin' out in front o' the shack up on the bench above the crick one night, when Mr. Sun he's gone an' dipped in behind the big ridge back of us, an' the whole canyon she's peaceful an' kind o' dark an' ghosty-lookin' an' pretty, like—like things was when yuh was a kid back home along about dark, an' the chores was all done an' yuh had nothin' to do but laze around till the old lady called yuh to go to bed, an'— Yuh know what I mean.

It was like that down there in the canyon, an' we're layin' out in front smokin'. We're hooked up to hike out for the hills prospectin' the next morning. We're layin' there smokin' an' Curly he opens up about this wife o' his back in Philadelphia.

"I'm goin' to write an' tell her to get a divorce," he says. "I been tryin' to make good long enough, an' can't make it stick. I been away four years now, an' she don't care a lot about me no more anyhow. I might as well wind it up. She's too scared o' hurtin' my feelin's to do it herself, but I know she'd like to. Mind yuh, I ain't kickin'. She's a good

square kid, as good an' square as they make 'em. She's stuck to me in good shape, but I reckon she's some tired of it, an' I'm goin' to give her a chance to cut loose. It's comin' to her."

Ed he smokes on a while an' then he spits an' says, "Whyn't yuh cut this out an' go back an' live with her like a man ought?"

I plumb hate to hear a man laugh like Curly did. "I reckon I wouldn't if I could, huh?" he says. "Go back? I can't."

"The trail's open's far as I can see," Ed reminds him.

"It ain't open for me," Curly comes back at him, savage. "What's this little wad amount to? Huh! If I hadn't never left, it might o' turned out all right; I dunno. Her folks had quite a bundle, an' she was used to things."

"I didn't have nothin' when we ran away an' got hitched. Her people they kicked up some row. They wouldn't have a lot to do with her after, an' wouldn't give her nothin'. We didn't care for a spell. We was goin' to show what we was made of."

"It wasn't bad for a couple o' years, an' then things begun to kind o' grind. I reckon they mostly do with all of 'em. I was still clerkin' in the office an' they didn't seem much ahead. We got on each other's nerves a little, I reckon. The everlastin' pinch an' worry—"

"Sometimes I think if I'd just o' stuck it out it'd been all right in time. I dunno."

"Then I got the Alaska bug. It was a chance to make the big stake quick, we figured, an' I fell for it. I might o' gone back after the first year, but I didn't. She hadn't said a lot about wantin' me, an' I reckon my pride was workin' a little. Then another year went by an' I couldn't go then. I dunno whether she's brave an' won't beef or just don't care no more. I dunno. I know I'm up against it an' can't make good, an' it ain't fair to her to keep her hangin' on this way waitin' any longer. I'm goin' to bust it."

"D'ye ever figure that maybe she's hangin' on waitin', an' hopin' an' keepin' her mouth shut about the ache that's in

her, 'cause she's got some pride o' her own an' don't want to beef an' queer yuh from makin' good up here?" Ed he asks him, slow-like. "Ever figure it that fashion?"

Curly he humps his shoulders kind o' sullen. "Oh, yes, I know," he says. "But—"

"Ye mind me o' young Tom Montrose," Ed cuts in. "Tom he was in some o' the same fix. A young fellow from Altoona, Pennsylvania, he was."

"Him an' me we bummed around together for some three years around Dawson an' Fairbanks. Prospected some, we did. Tom he'd gone and hitched up with a dame whose folks had it an' he didn't. He played this game same as you have, an' he played in the same luck."

"Three years an' more he hiked around the country workin' on lays that wasn't worth ten cents to the square yard an' stakin' wrong on cricks that other guys with less sense cleaned up on."

"He got thinkin' a lot like you, Curly. A lot. I'm in Okonuk the year after the camp's struck when the big blow-off comes. Tom he's been workin' on a layout on Birch crick for a couple o' months, an' one day—in August it was—I spot him on the street."

"It's like everything I take a try at," he tells me. "Pay claims on each side o' me, an' I couldn't locate a color with a microscope in that ground I'm workin'. I could o' had the lay on either o' the claims to either side, but o' course I had to pick the wrong one. Me that needed it."

"There's a Swede workin' one comes in once a month an' blows thousands in the dance halls, an' the other one's bein' worked by a Russian Finn that's savin' up to get down to Seattle an' blow it all in one big one. Me that needs it couldn't have that luck, could I? It's my last chip, Ed," he says to me.

"A couple o' weeks later Greasy Jack—him an' me'd both bummed around with young Tom—Greasy he come to me an' says he's got a date with Tom in camp the day before that Tom don't keep."

"I'm some worried about the kid," Greasy says. "He don't talk right last

time he's in. I'm scared the country's got him.'

"'What yuh drivin' at?' I says, knowin' all the time.

"'He don't keep his date with me,' Greasy says. 'Let's mush out to the crick an' have a look at him.'

"They ain't neither of us says what's on our minds while we're hikin' out over the hills. Not us. We're too sure o' what we're goin' to find—an' we found it.

"Yuh know how them minges an' mosquitoes are up there in summer? Gee! He must o' been dead some three or four days, an' it's hot weather, too. Hot for that land.

"He's layin' with his head on the table an' the gun still clutched in his right hand. He was an awful sight.

"'Ought to let that wife o' his know, I reckon,' Greasy says when we'd laid him out in the bunk. 'I reckon this is writ to her.'

"He picks up a lot o' sheets o' paper with writin' on 'em that was on the table he'd been layin' on. They was some bloody in spots but yuh could make it all out.

"Say, yuh know I bawled that day for the first time since the last time my dad licked me, an' I was nine year old then. Pitifullest darn thing I ever read. He goes on in this letter about how he's tried an' can't make it stick, an' how he savvys she's tired an' sick o' waitin' for him.

"I mind how some of it reads: 'It's the easiest way out,' she goes. 'It may hurt yuh for a while but you'll soon get over it. I know you've pretty well forgotten me in the time I've been gone, and it won't be so hard. It wasn't what we planned, was it, dear? Back there in the days when it was all so new and beautiful and we were so sure! They seem a long ways off now, those days. If you had just said in any of your letters that you wanted me to come back, I might have had the courage to stick it out, but I know that there isn't any welcome for me now even if I do hit it. I have tried very hard, dear, and I hope—'

"Say, it was a tough one, readin' that letter there in that damn shack with all

those minges an' mosquitoes buzzin' around an' that thing layin' over there under the blanket, that thing that'd been a darn good tillikum o' both of us. Tough.

"Greasy he gathers that letter all together.

"'I'm goin' to send it to her, damn her soul,' he says. 'If there's anything human left in her this ought to be some punishment. I'm goin' to send it an' tell her just how we found him an' what he's been up against up here. I hope it haunts her for the rest o' her life.'

"I plumb hoped the same thing. It was tough. We buries him on the hill back o' the shack an' hits for camp.

"We'd just lined up at the Golden Dream bar for our first drink after makin' the hike in, when the Blackjack Kid—he's runnin' the Golden Dream then—he comes in.

"'I been lookin' all over for you,' he says. 'Young Tom Montrose's wife, she's here, an' nobody in camp knows where he's workin'.'

"Yuh could o' fanned me for a knock-out with a puff o' cigarette smoke. She's in the parlor when we go in. Pretty? Say! An' good! One o' the brand yuh know's O. K. from their mother's bed to their coffin the first time yuh peek at 'em.

"'I'm afraid Tom'll be angry,' she says, cryin' a little; 'but I couldn't wait any longer.'

"'I'll go get him for yuh,' I says, sparrin' for time.

"Me an' Greasy hikes out an' chins the thing over. It's a bad layout any way yuh look at it. Love? Kid, if I ever seen the look in the eyes o' any woman turned my way, that was in hers for that dead man out there in the brush back o' — I ain't the kind they fall for like that.

"Anyhow, we put the camp wise an' faked a hike out there to bring him in. We come back to tell her that he'd been killed tryin' to save a pal from a she bear with cubs that they'd bumped into in the brush.

"We made a reg'lar hero out o' him an' put in all the trimmin's. She took it awful quiet.

"That was like him," she says. "He was that kind of a man."

"Then she wants us to take her out to the grave. We hiked her out there over the hills an' showed her where he was put."

"It was comin' noon when we got there. 'I'd like you to leave me alone here,' she says; an' we hiked back to the shack to wait for her."

"She come in away late in the night. 'I shall live here,' she says. 'I feel like I was nearer to him someway here.'"

"Yuh can't very well do that, ma'am," I tells her. "This here's no place for a lady alone."

"I must," she says. "He was all I had. Would you go now?"

"We went O. K. It was awful tough. I never see a woman look or talk like that. She talked just like a dead man looks. Yuh know what I mean? When yuh heard her talk yuh knew it was the finish. See?"

"Only a dead man—yuh put him under the ground an' he's through; but she's got to live. Gee!"

"She stayed on there at the cabin alone winter an' summer, an' she's there yet, I reckon. All alone there. It was tough."

"Me an' Greasy, we burnt that there letter on the way back to camp that night. She thinks he was some man an' that's somethin'. Lots o' times I see her an' hear her talkin' in my sleep o'

nights. That kind o' talk like a dead man looks. If he'd o' only just held on or gone back—"

We lays there a long time in front o' the cabin, listenin' to the crick burblin' away down below an' watchin' the dark in the canyon an' the shadows on the slope across growin' darker an' darker an' not sayin' nothin'. It was awful touchin', the way Ed he told that yarn."

By an' by Curly he gets up an' goes in the shack. Me an' Ed we lay around a while longer smokin' an' not sayin' nothin', an' after a bit Curly he pikes out o' the shack with his pack on his back."

Ed he don't move but Isits up. "Why, where yuh hikin' for now, Curly?" I says.

"Home," he says, an' he fades away down the trail toward camp."

"He'll make Skagway in about five days, an' Seattle in four more, an' Philadelphia in five to follow that," Ed figures up after a bit. "In fourteen days he'll be huggin' her an' forgettin' all about all this. It's time he plugged back; he was about all in."

"Who's this Tom Montrose party, Ed?" I asks him. "I never heard o' him."

"He wasn't," Ed says. "But he might o' been if Curly'd o' stayed in this land much longer. Lyin's one o' the very best little things I do. Le's turn in."



A MOON SONG

By Skipwith Cannell

I LUST for the full moon
 As a man lusts for his woman.
 When the moon is full
 The shadows whimper one to another,
 And the Gods bearing lances
 Walk grimly upon the ploughed earth
 In converse with the old dead
 And with me.

HIS PARTNER

By André Tridon

WHY did I take that bleary brigand Zabulon into partnership? . . . I owe him my start in life. Twenty years ago I was drawing from Goldstone & Silverstein a weekly salary of thirteen dollars and a half, in consideration of which I had to look handsome and recite to their patrons short essays on the Rubenses, Rembrandts and Turners that hung in their galleries. When the artistic mercury of a visitor rose to the buying point Mr. Goldstone appeared on the scene, snatched him away and thus saved me from the demoralizing influence of a commission on the sale. I never even knew the price of any painting.

Once, however, I overheard Mr. Goldstone accepting an offer made to him by a bearded little person whom he addressed as "Your Highness." Old Zabulon also heard it. The door to Mr. Goldstone's private sanctum was ajar.

"Very well, Your Highness, I will take fourteen thousand dollars."

The next day, Zabulon and I, carrying respectively a Rubens and a receipted bill, betook ourselves to the dignified dwelling that sheltered His Highness. His Highness was not alone. The towering, puffy Duchess, whose munificence enabled him to gratify his artistic instincts, was watching the unwrapping of the canvas with a look of sour expectancy. Zabulon stood the Rubens on an easel. I manipulated with professional gestures one or two window shades and indicated to the Duchess the proper "angle."

"And how much did you pay for this abomination?"

"My dear," His Highness expostulated with a decidedly imported accent, "a bagatelle—yes, a trifle. Not quite—a thousand."

She compressed into a "Well!" all the derogatory intimations a truckman could have distributed among twenty-five old English monosyllables, and wheeled about.

Three days later, as I was regaining my quarters, Zabulon oozed out of a dark doorway and stopped me. He pressed into my hand a clipping from a society column: "His Highness, the Duke de Bonarotti, is a guest on Barney Coyn's yacht bound for Old Point Comfort. The Duchess is entertaining her mother, Mrs. Jamborey Smith, of Buffalo, at her Madison Avenue house." Then he whispered:

"I have three thousand dollars in the bank; you have the looks and the clothes. How about working it fifty-fifty?"

The next morning I had the Duchess on the 'phone. A rich collector was anxious to add her Rubens to his collection. Would she sell it at a considerable advance? We understood His Highness never cared much for it. I tremblingly offered her two thousand dollars. She would have been grateful for half that.

Zabulon and I called for it that afternoon after the store closed. We counted out to the Duchess twenty hundred-dollar notes and she gave us a receipt, the wording of which had been prepared by Zabulon's nephew, who was a lawyer. At the noon hour Zabulon and I had signed a contract of partnership. The next day we sold the Rubens to a Long Island worthy who, as Zabulon revealed to me, had offered thirteen thousand dollars for it a month before. . . .

And the Duke? . . . Well, on that cruise he formed a close friendship that gave the Duchess legal grounds for getting rid of him very soon after.

THE BITELESS DOG

By Israel Solon

SCENE—*A university campus on a June morning. Velma Dorey and Eugene Palmer are discovered walking leisurely toward a large tree, each carrying a tennis racket.*

EUGENE (*with rising eloquence*)

Love? Love, indeed! Love is but a stalking ghost, a vestige, a relic of the brutal struggle for existence. There is no excuse for love in civilized society. Its sanctity, the reverence love still retains among people of low intelligence, it owes entirely to the fact that marriages are performed not in heaven but in church and by a minister. Before long, men and women with any sense of the dignity of life will consider it as shameful to boast of their loves as of their appetites for food or drink. I tell you, love's on its last—

VELMA

Oh, the flood of words, words! (*Petulantlly*) Remember, Eugene, I shall *not* ask you again.

EUGENE (*drily, as he sits down at the base of the tree*)

Yes, that's right. You will *not* ask me again. I'll remember.

VELMA (*sitting down also*)

Remember, Eugene, I shall *not* ask you again.

EUGENE (*lightly*)

Oh, yes. I'll remember. Don't you forget—

VELMA

You'll be sorry.

EUGENE

It will serve me right—don't you care.

VELMA (*taking up her tennis racket and rising hastily to her feet*)

I'm in earnest, Mr. Palmer.

EUGENE (*rising leisurely*)

I beg your pardon; you mean in bad temper. It's foolish of you—I forgive you the "Mr. Palmer."

VELMA (*making a vicious drive at an imaginary ball*)

I assure you, I am determined.

EUGENE (*leaping into the air and pretending to return the ball*)

"Disagreeable" is a better word for it. And it isn't a bit becoming—

VELMA (*indignantly*)

Mr. Palmer, my name is "Miss Dorey," if you please.

EUGENE (*drily*)

No, Velma, "Miss Dorey" does not please me at all. Awfully stupid of me. "Mrs. Palmer" might—

VELMA (*despairingly*)

Oh, the flood of words, words!

EUGENE (*persuasively*)

Do be reasonable, Velma. A biteless dog must bark.

VELMA (*pathetically*)

You bite cruelly, and your bark is worse than your bite. (*Appealingly*) How *can* you be so cruel to your friends?

EUGENE (*astonished*)

Not be cruel to my friends? Whom else am I to be cruel to? It's the savage who is cruel to his enemies—the civilized man is cruel to his friends. Culture is wasted on you.

VELMA

How long do you intend to go on joking?

EUGENE

As long as you go on being serious. Fun is the tonic for gravity. Let's be thankful.

VELMA (*snappily*)

Eugene, there's no use in your going on like that. You're not going to beat me with words. You are *not*, I tell you!

EUGENE (*sadly*)

I believe you are right. I never shall be able to beat you with words. (*Despairingly*) Oh, why can't I use a club? What an abject, feed-out-of-the-hand slave civilization has made of me!

VELMA

Oh, the flood of words, words!

EUGENE (*ignoring the interruption, and shaking his fist*)

Civilization has robbed me of the fist and the club, and in their stead given me language. (*To VELMA, threateningly*) Words, words! An outrageous bargain! Now I must suffer for it. (*Pleadingly*) Can't you have a little sympathy for me in my affliction?

VELMA (*pitifully*)

Eugene, can't you see that this is no time for trying to be funny?

EUGENE (*scandalized*)

Eh? Funny? This? I had not intended it to be funny. (*Sighing*) Ah, well! Man's tragedy has been woman's comedy since time began.

VELMA (*desperately*)

Eugene, I shall ask you just once more!

EUGENE (*alarmed*)

Please, please don't! Please don't. Remember, you said you would not.

VELMA (*firmly*)

I shall ask you just once more.

EUGENE (*sadly*)

I feared all the time you would.

VELMA

Do—you—love—me?

EUGENE (*appealingly*)

Velma, why do you ask me for so spurious, so disreputable a thing as love? Love is not a boon—it's a disease.

VELMA (*darkly*)

Some men marry for money.

EUGENE (*with a heavy heart*)

Yes, and some men marry for love. Only think how low some lost souls sink! . . . Let's not judge them too harshly. We may ourselves be driven to it—heaven help us!

VELMA (*pleadingly*)

Eugene, please tell me: do you love me?

EUGENE

What matters it? Why need you care? (*Declaiming*) You know, love's the lash on the back of the galley slaves; love's the bait in Life's trap; love's the sugar coating on the bitter pill of existence; love's the Pied Piper's tune; love's the mask—

VELMA (*desperately*)

Do you love me? Do you? Do you?

EUGENE (*sadly*)

It's useless, of course, to appeal to your sense of honor, decency, or humanity—you have no such sense. Velma, you don't mean an out-and-out confession?

VELMA

Yes, an out-and-out confession.

EUGENE (*throwing up his hands*)

Of course. I might have known as much. You are a woman; that means

that you confess nothing yourself, but demand that the man confess everything.

VELMA (*despairingly*)

Oh, oh! (*She follows him up, punctuating her words with her tennis racket*)
Do you love me? Do you? Do you?

EUGENE (*backing up against the tree and shielding himself with his tennis racket*)

Weakling—coward—imbecile that I am!

VELMA (*smashing down his racket with hers*)

Say it! Say it! Do you love me? Confess! Confess!

EUGENE (*surrendering*)

Yes, yes, yes! I love you—I love you. I'll confess anything, everything. Only say the word, and I'll shout my love for you from the roof of the Philosophy Building. Crook your little finger, and I'll make my love for you the thesis for my degree—

VELMA (*appeased*)

That will do, Eugene.

EUGENE

Oh, love is a vile, virulent disease!

VELMA

And now, Eugene, do you love me? Just me?

EUGENE (*with a sigh of relief*)

Yes, you, just you. Thank heaven for that!

VELMA (*poutingly*)

Oh, you don't understand me!

EUGENE (*sadly*)

No, I suppose not—I am sure I don't. You are not complaining, are you?

VELMA

Oh, I think it's terrible, terrible of a man to marry a woman for money!

EUGENE

The miserable slave! . . . But what right have I to be calling anyone names?

VELMA (*coaxingly*)

Tell me, Eugene: do you love me for myself? For myself alone?

EUGENE (*bewildered*)

Eh? Your self? (*Violently*) No! No! No! There really is a limit to even my infamy. (*Rampant*) I have been stifling the truth because of my cowardly scruples about causing you pain. (*He advances toward her menacingly.*) Now you shall hear it. You shall hear it, I tell you! I do *not* love you for yourself alone; no, nor for myself alone, nor for both of ourselves alone. I—

VELMA (*vexed*)

Eugene, I *do* wish you would try to understand me!

EUGENE (*throwing up his hands*)

What—again? No, Velma. It's no use. From now on, my efforts will all be in the other direction. (*Sighing*) Oh, well; I suppose I would rather love than understand you, anyway.

VELMA (*poutingly*)

You should do both.

EUGENE

Understand and love you? Impossible. I am not god enough to succeed if I am fool enough to try.

VELMA (*hesitatingly*)

Are you quite certain, Eugene, that you are not in love with my, with my—looks?

EUGENE (*eying her critically*)

Well, just the least little bit, perhaps.

VELMA (*with hanging head*)

Nor with my—form?

EUGENE (*with mock horror*)

Preposterous, I assure you!

VELMA (*in desperation*)

Eugene Palmer, why do you love me? Why? Why?

EUGENE

I see: since you got me to confess that I love you, you mean to keep at

me until I tell you why. Is that it? I advise you to be careful—if you don't want to find out too much.

VELMA

Why do you love me? Why? Why?

EUGENE

You just love to hear me call myself names, don't you?

VELMA (*doggedly*)

Why do you love me?

EUGENE

You don't want a reason?

VELMA (*snappily*)

Yes, a reason! I must have a reason. I will have a reason!

EUGENE

A perfectly lovely, romantic and respectable reason, of course. Otherwise—b-r-r-r!

VELMA (*earnestly*)

Eugene, I beg of you, tell me the truth. Please, please, tell me the truth. I must know it. Just tell me the truth. Please do.

EUGENE

What—the truth? You ask for it? Really? You? Me? (*He grasps both her hands in both of his, and speaks ecstatically.*) Thank you—thank you, Velma. You have enriched me beyond my farthest hope. You have just made me a gift of the world, and yourself with it. I knew that in the end you would be guided by your braver, your worthier self. Don't you feel better, stronger, now that you are facing the truth? And I shall not fail you, never fear. I will tell you the truth. There is nothing I so love as telling the truth.

VELMA (*releasing her hands*)

No, Eugene, you only love to tell people the hard and ugly truth. Nobody likes that kind of truth.

EUGENE (*gasping*)

Oh, what a narrow escape! (*He is his old self again.*) It's for honest men

to tell the hard and ugly truth—cowards won't tell it.

VELMA (*combatively*)

I want the truth.

EUGENE

Really? But if it is hard and ugly?

VELMA (*violently*)

Eugene Palmer, you are ashamed to tell me the truth about yourself! Ashamed!

EUGENE

No, not ashamed, but afraid—afraid for you.

VELMA

Why do you love me? Why? Why?

EUGENE (*with fine contempt*)

Then listen: I love you because I am a weakling, a cowardly, shameless weakling. I call myself a man, but I behave like the filings, like the filings that are being drawn to the magnet. I consider myself a reasonable and reasoning being, yet I fly to my doom just as the moth flies to the flame. I permit my reason, my will, my plans, my purposes to be set aside, mocked, destroyed—by what? By love! The most fugitive, the most fortuitous, the frailest, the silliest—

VELMA

Oh, there you go again about your silly plans—

EUGENE (*in fine frenzy*)

There! My silly plans and purposes! Woman is of an alien race and mocks us with an alien tongue. That man must take woman for wife—that is tragedy! Tell me this, tell me: will you grant me my own plans and purposes?

VELMA

Oh, don't bother me! You should have no plans and purposes of your own. Your silly—

EUGENE (*staggered*)

Oh! No plans, no purposes of my own! (*Desperately*) I tell you, that is asking too much from any man!

VELMA (*quietly*)

Where is the man that asks less from the woman? Have you consulted with me that your plans for yourself might not hinder my plans for myself? Have I ever made any such demands of you as you have just made of me?

EUGENE (*hectoringly*)

Why don't you? Why don't you demand of me the right to live your life your own way? Why don't you demand of me the guarantee of your personal freedom?

VELMA (*earnestly*)

Where would be the good of it, Eugene? Is it within your power to grant it to me? Would it make any real difference whether you said yes or no? Foolish boy, are you quite certain that my own plans for myself would be better for me or you? . . . Do give me an honest answer, Eugene: why do you love me? Why *me*?

EUGENE

Oh, it might very well have been someone else.

VELMA

Would you marry me if I were a poor girl?

EUGENE (*thoughtfully*)

Let me see. Would I? If you were as poor as Martha, for instance?

VELMA (*eagerly*)

Yes, yes, Eugene. If I were as poor as Martha, would you still love me? Would you still want to marry me—share your life with me?

EUGENE (*after filling his lungs*)

Velma, if you were as poor as Martha, you would drag yourself about on all fours, a soggy gunnysack about your waist, a pail of dirty water in one hand and a scrubbing brush in the other; in shoes that were twisted, wet and dirty, and several sizes too large for your big feet (*Horried, she looks at her feet.*)—the feet you would have as Martha. Your soft, pink hands, your polished fingernails, would be cracked (*She gasps.*)—

greasy, black with grime and splinters. And, in all probability, you would say: "Honest, missus, I ain't done it." Would I love you if you were a poor girl? Would I want to marry you, share my life with you?

VELMA (*timidly*)

Yes? Yes?

EUGENE (*firmly*)

No, no! I refuse to believe myself capable of being so degraded. Besides, intermarriage of the classes is against my principles.

VELMA (*petulantly*)

There's no use in your making a joke of this, Eugene. I—I shall not be married for my money.

EUGENE (*sadly*)

No. For my undoing, more likely.

VELMA (*firmly*)

When I marry, I shall give my money to my mother.

EUGENE

Really! Now won't that be perfectly lovely! And when I marry, I shall give my money to my father.

VELMA

Oh! Oh! (*With rising anger*) Why do you love me? Why? I want an honest, a complete, a satisfying answer. Why do you love me?

EUGENE (*calmly*)

Sorry, Velma. Can't give it to you.

VELMA (*snappily*)

Can't? Why can't you?

EUGENE

Because an honest and complete answer will not satisfy you. What you want is a pretty answer.

VELMA (*with rising anger*)

I see; I see it all now. (*Tauntingly.*) You, Eugene, for all your brave words, are afraid to speak honestly, openly, freely—to me! You tell me that it is

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I who am weak, that it is I who am afraid, that it is I whom you are trying to spare. But I know better. It is you who are afraid. It is you who are hiding behind my alleged weakness. It is for yourself that you invented my "feminine romanticism." It is you who are the coward. Yes, afraid! You! Afraid!

EUGENE (*trembling*)

Velma, don't, don't. Don't! You—I—

VELMA

Yes, you, afraid! You!

EUGENE

Velma, I, I— (*He advances toward her and takes her hands nervously, fixing her with his burning eyes.*) I love you

because—because you appeal to me physically as no other woman—I—

VELMA (*tearing herself free with one violent effort, and tottering blindly*)

Oh, you—!!!

(*She dashes off at her topmost speed, turning her head from time to time to assure herself that he is not trying to overtake her.*)

EUGENE (*gazing after her sorrowfully.*

After a moment)

Velma! Velma Dorey! Miss Dorey! (*Head down, he takes a few steps in the opposite direction, then stops, turns about and hesitates a moment. He turns about again and walks off slowly, head down, mowing down the grass with his tennis racket.*)



A DESERT VISION

By Clinton Scollard

I RODE the desert spaces
That billowed vast and wide,
And immemorial faces
Came down the twilight tide.
I crouched the blue vault under,
The planet-sown abyss,
Held by the haunting wonder
Of great Semiramis.

All others failed and faded,
But she shone as of old,
Her purple hair thick-braided
With dull Assyrian gold.
Her robes had woven glories
Diaphanous but bright;
Her red lips told the stories
Of manifold delight.

Her deep eyes kept repeating
Runes whereof love was theme;
Her round arms reached entreating
To ecstasies of dream;
Then burst the moon in flower,
The vision slipped away,
But I had, for an hour,
Been king in Nineveh!

THE NIGHT ROMANCE OF EUROPE: PARIS

By George Jean Nathan

This is the fourth article in THE SMART SET'S series, "The Night Romance of Europe." It has been the aim of the authors of these articles to paint the picture of the nocturnal pleasures of the Continent without entering into the ethical or moral side of the subject. The first article dealt with Vienna; the second, with Berlin; the third, with London.

FOR the American professional seeker after the night romance of Paris, the French have a phrase which, be it soever inelegant, retains still a brilliant verity. The phrase is "*une belle poire*." And its Yankee equivalent is "sucker."

The French, as the world knows, are a kindly, forgiving people: and though they cast the epithet, they do so in manner tolerant and with light arpeggio—of Yankee sneer and bitterness containing not a trace. They cast it as one casts a coin into the hand of some mauling beggar, with commingled oh-wells and philosophical pity. For in the Frenchman of the Paris of today, though there run not the blood of Lafayette, and though he detest Americans as he detests the Germans, he yet, detesting, sorrows for them, sees them as mere misled yokels, unc cosmopolite, obstreperous, of comical posturing in ostensible un-Latin lech, vainglorious and spying—children into whose hands has fallen Zola, children adream, somnambulist, groping rashly for those things out of life that, groped for, are lost—that may come only as life comes, naturally, calmly, inevitably.

But the Frenchman, he never laughs at us; that would his culture forbid. And, if he smile, his mouth goes placid before the siege. His attitude is the attitude of one beholding a Comstock come

to the hill of Hörselberg in Thuringia, there to sniff and snicker in Venus's crimson court. His attitude is the attitude of one beholding a Tristan *en voyage* for a garden of love and roses which he can never reach. His attitude, the attitude of an old and understanding professor, shaking his head musingly as his tender pupils, unmellowed yet in the autumnal fragrances of life, giggle covertly over the pages of Balzac and Flaubert, over the nudes of Manet, over even the innocent yearnings of the bachelor Chopin.

The American, loosed in the streets of Paris by night, however sees in himself an other and a worldlier image. Into the crevices of his flat house in his now far-away New York have penetrated from time to time vague whisperings of the laxative deviltries, the bold saucinesses of the city by the Seine. And hither has he come, as comes a jack tar to West Street after protracted cruise upon the celibate seas, to smell out, as a very devil of a fellow, quotation-marked life and its attributes. What is romance to such a soul—even were romance, the romance of this Paris, uncurtained to him? Which, forsooth, the romance seldom is: for, though it may go athwart his path, he sees it not, he feels it not, he knows it not, can know it not, for what it is.

Romance to him means only an elab-

orate and circumspect winking at some perfectly obvious and duly checked little baggage; it means to him only a scarlet-cushioned seat along the mirrored wall of the Café Américain, a thousand incandescents, a string quartette sighing through "Un Peu d'Amour," a quart of "wine." Romance to him is a dinner jacket prowling by night into the comic opera (American libretto) purloins of modern Montmartre, with its spurious extravaganzas of rouge and roister, with its spider webs of joy. For him, there is romance in the pleasure girls who sit at the tables touching St. Michel before the Café d'Har-court, making patient pretense of sipping their Byrrh until a passing "*Eh, bébé*" assails their tympani with its suggested tintinnabulation of needed francs: for him—"models." And the Bullier, ghost now of that old Bullier where once little Luzanne, the inspiration of a hundred palettes, tripped the polka, the new Bullier with its colored electricity and ragtime band and professional treaders of the Avenue de l'Observatoire, is eke romance to his nostril. And so, too, he finds it atop the Rue Lepic in the now sham Mill of Galette, a capon of its former self, where Germaine and Florie and Mireille, veteran battle-axes of the Rue Victor Massé, pose as modest little workgirls of the Batignolles. And so, too, in that loud, crass annex of Broadway, the Café de Paris—and in the Moulin Rouge, which died forever from the earth a dozen years ago when the architect Niermans seduced the place with the "art nouveau"—and amid the squalid hussies of the fake Tabarin—and in the Rue Royale, at Maxim's, with its Tzigane orchestra composed of German gipsies and its toy balloons made by the Elite Novelty Co. of Jersey City, U. S. A.

The American notion of Paris under the guardianship of the French stars, of Paris caressed by the night wind come down from Longchamps and filtered through the chestnut branches of Boulogne, is usually achieved from the Sons of Moses who, in spats and sticks, adorn the entrance of the Olympia and the sidewalks of the Café de la Paix and

interrogatively guide-sir the passing foreign mob. This Paris consists chiefly of a view of the exotic bathtub of the good King Edward of Britain, quondam Prince of Wales, in the celebrated house of the crystal staircase in the Rue Chabanais, of one of the two "mysterious" midinette speak-easys in the dark Rue de Berlin (where the "midinettes" range from the tender age of forty-five to fifty), of the cellar of the tavern near the Panthéon with its tawdry wenches and beer and butt-soaked floors—of tawdry resorts and tawdrier peoples.

Do I treat of but a single class of Americans? Well, maybe so. But the other class—and the class after that—think you *these* are so different? So different, goes my meaning, in the matter of appropriating to themselves something of the deep and very true romance that sings still in the shadowed corners of this one-time Flavia of capitals, that sounds still, as sounds some far-off steam-boat whistle wail in the death-quiet of night, pleading and pathetic, that calls still to the dreamers of all the world from out the tomb of faded triumphs and forgotten memories?

True, alas, it is, that gone is the Paris of Paris's glory—gone that Paris that called to Louise with the luring melody of a zithered soul. True, alas, it is, that the Paris of the Guerbois, with its crowd of other days—Degas and Cladel and Astruc and the rest of them—is no more. Gone, as well, and gone forever is the cabaret of Bruant, him of the line of François Villon—now become a place for the vulgar oglings of Cook's tourists taxicabbing along the Boulevard Rochecouart. Gone the wild loves, the bravuras, the *camaraderie* of warm night skies in the old Boulevard de Clichy, supplanted now with a strident concatenation of Coney Island sideshows: the "Cabaret de l'Enfer," with its ballyhoo made up as Satan, the "Cabaret du Ciel," with its "grotto" smelling of Sherwin-Williams light blue paint, the "Cabaret du Néant," with its Atlantic City plate glass trick of metamorphosing the visiting doodle into a skeleton, the "Lune Rousse," with its mean Marie Lloyd species of lyrical concupiscence,

the "Quat'-z-Arts," with its charge of two francs the glass of beer and its concourse of loafers dressed up like Harry B. Smith "poets," in black velvet, corduroy *grimpants* and wiggly hirsutal cascades, to impress "atmosphere" on the minds of the attendant citizenry of Louisville. And gone, too, with the song of Clichy is the song from the heart of St. Michel, the song from the heart of St. Germain. "Tea rooms," operated by American old maids, have poked their noses into these once genuine boulevards . . . and, as if giving a further filip to the scenery, clothing shops with windows haughtily revealing the nobby art of Kuppenheimer, post-card shops laden to the sill's edge with lithographs disclosing erstwhile *Saturday Evening Post* cover heroines, and case upon case displaying in lordly enthusiasm the choicest cranial confections of the house of Stetson. . . .

What once on a time was, is no more. But Romance, notwithstanding, has not yet altogether deserted the Paris that was her loyal sweetheart in the days when the tricolor was a prouder flag, its subjects a prouder people. There is something of the old spirit of it, the old verve of it, lingering still, if not in Montmartre, if not in the edisoned highways of the Left Bank, if not in the hitherward boulevards, then still somewhere. But where, ask you, is this somewhere? And I shall tell you. This somewhere is in the eyes of the Parisian girl; this somewhere is in the heart of the Parisian man. There, romance has not died—one must believe, will never die.

And, having told you, I seem to hear you laugh. "We thought," I would seem to hear you say, "that he was going to tell us of concrete places, of concrete byways, where this so gorgeous romance yet tarries." And you are aggrieved and disappointed. But I bid you patience. I am still too young to be sentimental: so have you no fear. And yet, bereft of all of sentimentality, I issue you my challenge: this somewhere is in the eyes of the Parisian girl, this somewhere is in the heart of the Parisian man.

By Parisian girl I mean not the order

of Austrian wenches who twist their tummies in elaborate tango epilepsies in the Place Pigalle, nor the order of female curios who expectorate with all the gusto of American drummers in La Hannonet, nor yet the Forty-niners who foregather in the private entrance of 16 Rue Frochot. I do not mean the dead-eyed joy jades of the café concerts in the Champs Elysées. I do not mean the crow-souled scows who steam by night in the channels off the Place de la Madeleine. The girl I mean is that girl you notice leaning against the onyx balustrade at the Opéra—that one with lips of Burgundy and cheeks the color of roses in olive oil. The girl I mean is that phantom girl you see, from your table before the Rotonde across the way, slipping past the iron grilling of the Luxembourg Gardens—that girl with faded blouse but with eyes, you feel, a-color with the lightning of the world's jewels. The girl I mean is that girl you catch sight of—but what matters it where? Or what she leans against or what she wears or what her lips and eyes? If you know Paris, you know her. Whether in the Allée des Acacias or in the Boulevard Montparnasse, she is the same: the real French girl of still abiding Parisian romance; the real French girl in whose baby daughter, some day, will be perpetuated the laughter of the soul of a city that will not fade. And in whose baby girl in turn, some day long after that, it will be born anew.

Ah, me, the cynic in you! Do you protest that the girl of the balustrade, the girl of the Luxembourg, are very probably American girls here for visit? Well, well! *Tu te paye ma tête*. Who has heard of romance in an American girl? I grant you, and I make grant quickly, that the American girl is, in the mass, more ocularly massaging, more nimble with the niblick, more more in several ways than her sister of France; but in her eyes, however otherwise lovely, is glint of steel where should be dreaming pansies, in her heart reverie of banknotes where should be *billets doux*.

And so by Parisian man I mean, not the chorus men of Des Italiens, betal-

cumed and odoriferous with the scents of Pinaud, those weird birds who are regarded by the casual Yankee as typical and symbolic of the nation. Nor do I mean the fish-named, liver-faced denizens of the region down from the Opéra, those spaniel-eyed creatures who live in the tracks of petite Sapphos, who spend the days in cigarette smoke, the nights in scheming ambuscade. Nor yet the Austrian cross-breeds who are to be beheld behind the *gulasch* in the Rue d'Hauteville, nor the semi-Milanese who sibilate the *minestrone* at Aldegani's in the Passage des Panoramas, nor the Frenchified Spaniards and Portuguese who gobble the *guisillo madrileño* at Don José's in the Rue Helder, nor the half-French Cossacks amid the *potrokh*a in the Restaurant Cubat, nor the Orientals with the waxed mustachios and girlish waists who may be observed at moonlight dawdling over their *café à la Turque* at Madame Louna Sonnak's. These are the Frenchmen of Paris no more than the habitués of Back Bay are the Americans of Boston, no more than the Americans of Boston are—Americans.

* * *

It is night in Paris! It is night in the Paris of a thousand memories. And the Place de la Concorde lies silver blue under springtime skies. And up the Champs Elysées the elfin lamps shimmer in the moist leaves like a million topaz tears. And the boulevards are a-thrill with the melody of living. Are you, now far away and deep in the American winter, with me once again in memory over the seas in this warm and wonderful and fugitive world? And do you hear with me again the twang of guitars come out the hedges of the Avenue Marigny? And do you smell with me again the rare perfume of the wet asphalt and do you feel with me again the wanderlust in the spirit soul of the Seine? Through the frost on the windows can you look out across the world and see with me once again the trysting tables in the Boulevard Raspail, a-whisper with soft and wondrous monosyllables, and can you hear little Ninon laughing and Fleurette sighing, and little Hélène (just passed

nineteen) weeping because life is so short and death so long? Are you young again and do memories sing in your brain? And does the snow melt from the landscape of your life and in its place bloom again the wild poppies of the Saint Cloud roadways, telegraphing their drowsy content through the evening air to Paris?

Or is the only rosemary of Paris that you have carried back with you the memory of a two-step danced with some painted bawd at the Abbaye, the memory of the night when you drank six quarts of champagne without once stopping, to prove to the onlookers in the Rat Mort that an American can drink more than a damned Frenchman, the memory of that fine cut of roast beef you succeeded in obtaining at the Ritz?

* * *

Did I mention food? Ah-h-h, the night romance of Parisian nutriment! Parisian, said I. Not the low hybrid dishes of the bevy of British-American hotels that surround the Place Vendôme and march up the Rue de Castiglione or of such nondescripts as the Tavernes Royale and Anglaise—but *Parisian*. For instance, my good man, *caneton à la bigarade*, or duckling garnished with the oozy, saliva-provoking sauce of the peel of bitter oranges. There is a dish for you, a philter wherewith to woo the appetite! For example, my good fellow, sole Mornay (no, no, not the "sole Mornay" you know!), the sole Mornay whose each and every drop of shrimp sauce carries with it to palate and nostril the faint suspicion of champagne. Oysters, too. Not the Portuguese—those arrogant shysters of a proud line—but the Arcachons Marennes and Cancales *supérieures*: baked in the shell with mushrooms and cheese, and washed down exquisitely with the juice of grapes goldened by the French suns. And salmon, cold, with sauce Criliche; and artichokes made sentimental with that Beethoven-like fluid orchestrated out of caviar, grated sweet almonds and small onions; and ham boiled in claret and touched up with spinach *au gratin*. The romance of it—and the wonder!

But other things, alackaday, must concern us. *Au 'voir*, my beloveds, *au 'voir!* *Au 'voir* to thee, *La Matelote*, thou fair and toothsome fish stew, and to thee, *Perdreau Farci à la Stuért*, thou aristocratic twelve-franc seducer of the esophagus! *Au 'voir*, my adored ones, *au 'voir*.

Voilà! And now again are we afield under the French moon. What if no more are the grisettes of Paul de Kock and Murger to fascinate the eye with wistful diableries? What if no more the old Vachette of the Boul' Mich' and the Rue des Ecoles, last of the *cafés littéraires*, once the guzzling ground of Voltaire and Rousseau and many such another profound imbiber? What if no more the simple Montmartroise of other times, and in her stead the elaborate wench of Le Coq d'Or, redolent of new satin and parfum *Dolce Mia*? Other times, other manners—and other girls! And if, forsooth, Ninette and Manon, Gabrielle and Fifi, arch little mousmés of another and mayhap lovelier day, have long since gone to put deeper soul into the cold harps of the other angels of heaven, there still are with us other Ninettes, other Manons and other Gabrielles and Fifis. "*La vie de Bohème*" is but a cobwebbed memory: yet its hosts, though scattered and scarred, in spirit go marching on. The Marseillaise of romance is not stilled. In the little Yvette whose heart is weeping because the glass case in the Café du Dôme this day reveals no letter from her so grand André, gone to Cassis and there to transfer the sapphire of the sea and mesmerism of roses to canvas, is the heart of the little Yvette of the Second Empire. In the lips of Diane that smile and in the eyes of Hélène that dream and in the toes of Thérèse that dance is the smile, is the dream, is the dance in echo of the Paris of a day bygone.

Look you with me into the Rue de la Gaité, into the Gaité-Montparnasse, still comparatively liberated from the intrusion of foreign devils, and say to me if there is not something of old Paris here. Not the Superba, Fantasma Paris of Anglo-Saxon fictioneers, not the Broadwayed, Strandified, dandified

Paris of the Folies-Bergère and the Alcazar, but the Paris still primitive in innocent and unbribed pleasure. And into the Bobino, its sister music hall of the common people, where the favorite Stradel and the beloved Berthe Delny, "*petite poupée jolie*," as she so modestly terms herself, bring the grocer and his wife and children and the baker and his wife and children temporarily out of their glasses of Bock to yell their immense approval and clap their hands. I have heard many an audience applaud. I have heard applause for Tree at His Majesty's in London, for Schroth at the Kleines in Berlin, for Féraudy at the Comédie Française, for Skinner at the Knickerbocker—and it was stentorian applause and sincere—but I have never heard applause like the applause of the audience of these drabber halls. The thunders of the storm king are as a sonata against the staggering artillery of approbation when Pharnel of the Montparnasse sings "*C'est pas difficile*"; the howlings of the north wind are as zephyrs against the din of eulogy when Marius Reybas of the Bobino lifts a mighty larynx in "*Mahi Mahi*." Great talent? Well, maybe not. But show me a group of vaudevillians and acrobats who, like this group at the Gaité, can amuse one night with risqué ballad and somersault and the next with Molière—and not be shot dead on the spot!

Leave behind you Fysher's, where the smirking monsieur fills the red upholstery with big-spending American hinds by warbling into their liquored bodies cocoa butter ballades of love and passion, and come over to the untufted Maillol's. And hear Maillol sing for the price of a beer. Maillol's lyrics are not for the American virgin: but, at that, they sing laughter in place of Fysher lech. Leave behind you Pailard's, vainglorious in its bastard salades Danicheff, its soufflés Javanaise; leave the blatant Boulevard des Italiens for the timid *bistrot* of Monsieur Delmas in the scrawny Rue Huygens, with its *soupe aux legumes* at twenty centimes the bowl, its *cotelette de veau* at fifty the plate. A queer oasis, this, with old Delmas's dog suffering from the St.

Vitus and quivering against the tables as you eat; with its marked napkins in a rack, like the shaving cups in a rural barber shop, one napkin a week to each regular patron. Avaunt, ye gauds of Americanized Paris. Here are poor and starving artists come to dine aristocratically on seventy-five centimes—fifteen cents. Here are no gapings of Cook's; here no Broadway prowlers. A dank hole, yes, but in its cracked plaster the sense of Romany sunsets of yonder times. Leave behind the dazzling dance places of theatrical Montmartre, American, and come back of the wine shop in the Rue de la Montagne-Sainte-Geneviève! Leave behind the turning mill wheel, American, and come into the Avenue de Choisy, where over a preglacial store a couple of cornets baffle the night and set a hundred feet in motion, feet from the Gobelins quarter, feet from the Butte-aux-Cailles! More leathery feet, to be sure, than the suède feet of the Ziegfeld Montmartre, but kicking up a different wax dust, the wax dust of a different Paris.

But you are Anglo-Saxon, and to you romance, mayhap, means only Tobani and Edison, Maurice and Paul Poiret. And to you I am vulgar, crude; and I know not romance. Well, so be it. But, to me, Edison has driven romance out into the night. And Poiret has slammed the door in its pleading face.

* * *

It is springtime in Paris! It is night in the Paris of a thousand memories. Can you, now remote in the American winter, hear again through the bang of the steaming radiator and the crunch on the winter's snows the song that Sauterne sang into your heart on the terrace named after the lilacs—on that wonderful, star-born evening when all the world seemed like a baby's first laugh: all full of dreams and hopes and thrilling futures? And can you rub the white cold off the panes and look out across the Atlantic to a warmer land and see again the Gardens of the Tuileries sleeping in the moon glow and Sacré Cœur sentinelled against the springtime sky and the tables of the cafés along the Grand

Boulevards agog and a-glitter and the green-yellow lights of the Ambassadeurs tucked away in the trees and the al fresco amours at Fouquet's and the gay crowds on the Avenue de l'Opéra and the spacious bibbing in the Rue Halévy and the mystery of the Quai de la Tourneville and the massive splendor of Notre Dame blessing the night with its towered hands and girls shooting ebony arrows from the bows of ebony eyes? And no smell of Childs's cooking filters into the open to offend the nostril, for the sachet of the Bois de Boulogne breeze is again on the world. Ah, Bois de Boulogne, silent now under the slumbering heavens, where your equal? From the Prater to the Prado, from the Cassine to Central Park, one may not find the like of you, fairy wood of France!

Romance hunter, come with me. Stomach-turned at the fat niggers dressed up like Turks and Algerians and made to lend "an air" to the haunt of the nocturnal belly dancers in the Rue Pigalle, sickened at the stupid lewdities of the Rue Biot, disgusted at the brassy harlotries of the Lapin Agil', come with me into that *auberge* of the Avenue Trudaine where are banned catch-coin stratagems, fleshly pyrotechnics, that little refuge whose wall gives forth the tableau of Salis, he of the Niagaran whiskers and the old Chat Noir, strangling the adolescent versifiers of Montmartre, the tableau of the crimson rose of Poetry blossoming from out their strangling pools of blood. Come with me and sing a chorus with the crowd in the "conservatoire" of the Boulevard Rochechouart and beat time, like the rest of it, with knife on plate, with glass on table. Come away from the Brasserie des Sirènes of Mademoiselle Marthe in the Faubourg Poissonnière, from the Rue Dancourt, from the Moulin Rose in the Mazagan—from all such undiluted cellars of vicious prostitution—if these be Paris, then West Twenty-eighth Street is New York.

Look you, romance seeker, rather into the places of Montépin and Eugène Sue. The moon is down. The sound of dance is stilled in the city. So go we into the Rue Croissant, with its shave-

less thuggeries and marauding cabs. It is dark, very. And very quiet. And the sniff of unknown things is to be had in the air. Dens of drink with their furtive thieves . . . the enigma of the shadows of the church of Saint Eustache . . . slinking feet to the rear of you . . . at length, the Rue Pirouette and the sign of the angel Gabriel on the lantern before the house. Here is good company to be found! Well do I remember the *bon-camaraderie* of Henri Lavérte, that most successful of Parisian burglars, of the good Jean Darteau, that most artistic of all Parisian second story virtuosi, of pretty Mado Verallment, who was not convicted for the murder of her erstwhile lover Abernal, nor, at a later date, for that of her erstwhile lover Crepeat, both of whom, so it had been rudely whispered by her enemies, had rashly believed to desert her for another charmer. Witty and altogether excellent folk. Indeed, I might go further from the truth than to say that in no woman have ever I found a deeper, a more authentic appreciation of the poetry of Verlaine than in this Mademoiselle Mado.

So, too, up the stone steps and into the Caveau of the Rue des Innocents . . . and here—likewise a jolly party. Inquire of most persons about Le Caveau and you will be apprised that it is a "vile hole," "a place of the lowest order." It is dirty, so much will I grant; and it is of a Brobdignagian smell. Also, is it frequented almost entirely by murderers, garroters and thieves. But to say it is "a vile hole" or "a place of the lowest order" is to say what is not true. It is immeasurably superior to the tinselled inn of the Rue Royale. And its habitués constitute an infinitely more respectable lodge. If the left wall of the cavern contains its "roll of honor"—the names of all the erstwhile noted gentlemen patrons of the establishment who have, because of some slight carelessness or oversight, ended their days in the company of the public executioner—I still cannot appreciate that the list is any the less civilized than the head waiter's "roll of honor" at the celebrated tavern in the Avenue de l'Opéra.

Nor do the numerous scribbled inscriptions on the other walls, such saucy epigrams as "To hell with the prefect of police," "The police are damned low flea-full dogs" and the like impress me less favorably than the scribbled inscriptions on notes of assignation placed covertly by subsidized waiters into the serviettes of the Callot-adorned Thaisés in the spectacularized haunts of the Bois. The piano in Le Caveau may be diabetic, senescent, and its operator half blind and all knuckles (as he is), but the music it gives forth is full of the romance of Sheppard and Turpin, of stage coach days and dark and nervous highways, of life when life was in the world and all the world was young.

Paris when your skies are graying, how many of us know you? Do we know your Rue du Pont Neuf, with its silent melodrama under the dawning heavens, or do we know only the farce of your Montmartre? Do we know the drama of your Comptoir, of your Rue Montorgueil, when your skies are faintly lighting, or do we know only the burlesque of your Maxim's and your Catélans? Do we, when the week's work of your humbler people is done, see the laughter in dancing eyes in the Rue Mouffetard or, in the revel of your Saturday night, do we see only the belladonna'd leer of the drabs in the Place Pigalle? Do we hear the romance of your concertinas setting thousands of hobnailed boots a-clatter with Terpsichore in the Boulevard de la Chapelle, in Polonceau and Myrrha, or do we hear only your union orchestra souging through Mascagni in the Café de Paris? Do we know the romance of your peoples or the romance of your restaurateurs? Which? I wonder.

* * *

Paris has changed . . . it isn't the Paris of other days . . . and Paquerette, little Easter daisy in whose lips new worlds were born to you, little flower of France the music and perfume of whose youth are yours still to remember through the guerrilla warfare of the mounting years—little Paquerette is dead. And you are old now and married, and there are the children to look

out for—they're at the school age—and life's quondam melody is full of rests and skies are not always as blue as once they were. And Paris, four thousand miles beyond the seas—Paris isn't what it used to be!

But Paris is. For Paris is not a city—it is Youth. And Youth never dies. To Youth, while youth is in the arteries, Paris is ever Paris, a-throb with dreams, a-dream with love, a-love with triumphs to be triumphed o'er. The Paris of Villon and Murger and Du Maurier is still there by the Seine: it is only Villon and Murger and Du Maurier who are not. And if your Paquerette is gone forever, there is Zinette—some other fellow's Paquerette—in her place. And to him new worlds are born in her lips even as new worlds were born to you in the kisses of another's yesterday . . . and the music and the perfume of Zinette's youth shall, too, be rosemary some day to this other.

The only thing that changes in Paris is the Paris of the Americans, that foul swelling at the Carrara throat of Youth's fairyland. It is this Paris, cankered with the erosions of foreign gold and foreign itch, that has placed "souvenirs" on sale at the Tomb of Napoleon, that vends obscenities on the boulevards, that has raised the price of bouillabaisse to one franc fifty, that has installed ice cream at the Brasserie Zimmer, that has caused innumerable erstwhile respectable French working girls to don short yellow skirts, stick roses in their mouths, wield castanets and become Spanish dancers in the restaurants. It is this Paris that celebrates the hour of the apéritif with Bronx cocktails and "stingers," that has put Chicken à la King on the menu of the Soufflet, that has enabled the *ober-kellner* of Ledoyen to purchase a six-cylinder Benz, that has introduced forks in the Rue Falguière, that has made the *beguins* at the annual Quat'-z-Arts ball conscious of the visibility of their legs. It is this Paris that puts on evening clothes in order to become properly soused at Maxim's and cast confetti at the Viennese Magdalenes, that fights the cabmen, that sings "We Won't Go Home

Till Morning" at the Catelan, that buys a set of Maupassant in the original French (and then doesn't read it), that sits in front of the Café de la Paix reading the New York *Telegraph* and wondering what Jake and the rest of the gang are doing back home, that gives the Pittsburgh high sign to every good-looking woman walking on the boulevards in the belief that all French women are in the constant state of desiring a liaison, that callouses its hands in patriotic music hall applause for that great American, Harry Pilcer, that trips the turkey trot with all the Castle interpolations at the Tabarin. It is this Paris that changes year by year—from bad to worse. It is this Paris that remembers Gaby Deslys and forgets Cécile Sorel, that remembers Madge Lessing and arches its eyebrow in interrogation as to Marie Leconte. This is the Paris of Sniff and Snicker, this the Paris of New York.

But the other Paris, the Paris of the canorous night, the Paris of the Parisians! The little studio in the Rue Leopold Robert . . . Alinette and Reine and Renée . . . the road to Auteuil under the moon-shot baldaquin of French stars . . . the crowd in the old gathering place in the Boulevard Raspail . . . the music of the heathen streets . . . dawn in the Gardens of the Luxembourg . . .

Yes, there's a Paris that never changes. Always it's there for someone, someone still young, still dreaming, still with eyes that sweep the world with youth's wild ambitions. Always it's there, across the seas, for someone—maybe no longer you and me, exiles of the years in this far-away America—but still for someone younger, someone for whom the loves and adventures and the hazards of life are still so all-wondrous, so all-worth-while, so almighty. But, however old, however hardened by the trickeries of passing decades, those who have loved Paris, those to whom Paris has lifted her lips in youth, these never say good-bye to her. For in their hearts sings on her romance, for in their hearts march on the million memories of her gipsy days and nights.

THE BALLAD OF ST. JOHN OF NEPOMUK

By George Sterling

NOW to you all be Christmas cheer,
Good health and better luck!
Praise now the womb that gave to men
St. John of Nepomuk!

He stood before King Wenceslaus
With none to take his part—
Despair upon his kindly face,
But honor in his heart.

“How now, O priest!” the monarch cried,
(And death was in his smile):
“Didst shrive the faithless soul of her
Who did my bed defile?”

“Didst bid her go in peace who now
Hath left no peace to me?
Tell then the sin that thou didst shrive.
E’en as she told it thee!”

“O King,” our saint, unblenching, said,
“Such may I not reveal,
For priesthood’s vow upon my lips
Hath set a ghostly seal.

“That seal which on my mouth is set
Forever and for aye
Thou shalt not loose by mortal pain
Nor wrench with racks away.”

They stretched his body on the rack
And there their will they wrought;
He cried in his woe to seven saints,
But not the tale they sought.

“Confess,” the King in fury cried,
“Her love as it befell,
Or steel shall cleave thy way to death
And fire thy path to Hell!”

THE SMART SET

"O King," he said, "I will not speak,
Though thou in tears shouldst kneel;
For manhood's honor on my mouth
Hath set a mighty seal.

"And that seal set upon my mouth
More close than life does stay:
Thou canst not break it with a sword
Nor melt with fire away."

They wrought their will upon his flesh
With cursing and with scoff;
They gagged his mouth and from a bridge
At last they flung him off.

They cast him into Moldau stream,
Our saint who did no wrong;
But that true mouth which told no tale
God filleth now with song.

Wherefore pray thou our newborn Lord,
And John our saint as well,
That when a fair fame thou canst harm
No whisper thou shalt tell.

For since of her who gave him naught
He would not cause the fall,
How knightlier shalt thou guard the name
Of her who gives thee all!



FROM AN IMPRESSIONIST'S NOTEBOOK

By Archie Bell

BILLIE BURKE—Marshmallows toasting over Chinese punk sticks . . . a flying fish chasing a butterfly around St. Patrick's Cathedral . . . tapioca pudding served on hot oyster shells.

MARY GARDEN—Attar of roses in a vacuum cleaner . . . Salome dropping a veil on the grave of Cotton Mather . . . onion soup in grapefruit skins . . . Adelina Patti challenging Mrs. Pankhurst to a duel with pancake turners.

MRS. FISKE—Lillian Russell giving an imitation of Marie Dressler imitating Mother Jones . . . Laura Jean Libbey in Sing Sing writing her memoirs with a whitewash brush on the ceiling . . . Anthony Comstock and David Belasco dancing the tango.

LINA CAVALIERI—Garlic salad and spaghetti in the Martha Washington Hotel . . . Susan B. Anthony and Queen Mary playing hide-and-seek on the Champs Elysées . . . sunrise at the Folies Bergère.

MAUDE ADAMS—A Mormon eating sauerkraut on the steps of the Vatican . . . apple pie for breakfast . . . a quilting party at a roof garden.

THE BREAKFAST

By Richard Fisguill

“**T**HIEF!”

What struck me was the number of different languages in which the cry was voiced. French of course, as we were on the banks of the Seine; but there are two hundred thousand loyal German citizens in Paris, more Spaniards than you can find in any third class city of Spain, as many Italians as Florence itself can count, while as for Roumanians, Russians, Englishmen and Americans—*là là!* And these foreign Parisians are wealthy—all save myself, who, whether it be Paris or London, am obliged for my sins and those of my ancestors to push “Mimi” if I would eat. I was looking for copy when the bedlam broke out: “Stop, thief!”

I sprinted along with the others, every now and then feeling my left side to see if “Mimi” was there. As we poured out of the network of crooked streets back of the Palais Royal, I caught sight of our man for the first time. He was gaunt, hatless, covered with sweat, and a dodger such as I had never seen. At the Tuileries he passed six policemen lined up to receive him, got by a butcher and a leg of mutton, jumped clear over a baby carriage without awaking the nurse, kicked the wind out of a police dog that had leaped at his throat, whirled into a group of some hundred and fifty children who were celebrating Thursday in the Tuileries—and that gave Mr. Thief the time to breathe. One hundred and fifty upset French children would stop an avalanche. The policemen began to pick up children; nurses and parents took charge of the crowd.

Only five of us saw our man making

for the Seine—a Spanish bull fighter, an English pugilist, a New Orleans negro, myself and a fresh policeman who had just come up. Everybody else was busy with hoops, dolls, dust. But we five proposed to be in at the death. We ran low like a pack of hounds after our quarry. The policeman was ahead, the rest of us a few yards behind. I ran side by side with the New Orleans negro—a wealthy black man evidently, whose shining silk hat stuck to the back of his elongated cranium with all the steadiness of something riveted. I noticed that he felt his big diamond pin about as often as I felt for “Mimi.” Being Americans, we spoke French:

“What did he steal?” I panted, in excellent Parisian.

“A pocketbook,” my countryman replied. “I saw him take it; I’ll be a witness—” And he pronounced “*témoin*” very well for a person from New Orleans.

Our man had now reached the Seine. By the direction he took I saw that he was making for the big sewer. If he reached the sewer he was safe. Nobody except a desperate thief or a starving rat would swim up that black underground river of typhoid filth. I should have rather served two years and lost my citizenship. But the sewer was what our man wanted. Mentally I drafted a half-column of despair that I would ask “Mimi” to take down. Few thieves were so desperate as to prefer the big sewer to jail. I would receive a lous for my picture of the sewer (which I did not propose to enter); I would make way with an excellent breakfast next day . . .

But just as he reached the parapet from which he had to jump to reach

the mouth of the sewer, my man tripped on a dog leash and fell. I was disappointed. The policeman was not ten steps behind. The fugitive would never reach his sewer; my picture of underground despair would never dribble from "Mimi"; my excellent breakfast would be served to a U. S. Senator . . . But as the policeman was drawing his bayonet, I saw a kid-gloved fist come into violent contact with the Adam's apple of the law. The bayonet stopped halfway out of its tightly fitting scabbard. The law came down like a bag of sand. The thief, once more on his feet, laughed, waved his hand, jumped from the parapet into the Seine and made for his sewer. I shot my eyes back to follow up the kid-gloved fist and get an impression of its owner—a man about fifty, dressed in the height of fashion and smoking an enormous Russian cigarette:

"Strange," he explained to the negro and me—"quite strange! I thought I was hitting the thief." The blindest smile I ever saw came to his lips. Then I could not locate the gentleman by his accent. He was from the Continent of Asia, that is all I could make out. But Asia was large a bit; and I resolved to stop betting that I could tell a Persian from an Armenian. Meanwhile the policeman sat up, stared about him, felt his throat.

"My poor fellow," remarked the gentleman from somewhere in Asia, unbuttoning his frock coat and producing a red morocco pocketbook, "I aimed at the thief and hit you. Kindly—" Simultaneously with the French word for "kindly," a package of thin French banknotes fluttered from the red pocketbook. "Kindly accept this as a token of my respect for your unusual activity!"

In his gratitude the dusty policeman tried to brush from his assailant's frock coat dust that was not there. The Oriental smile grew blander. Throwing away the lengthy remains of his enormous Russian cigarette, the fine gentleman produced another, lit it, begged all our pardons, affectionately patted the rich black man on the shoulder, jumped into

one of the open cabs that had lined up to see the fun, gave an address I caught—the most fashionable café in Paris—and disappeared from the scene of his exploit, though not from me. I jumped into the next cab and gave the same address:

"*Seigneur!*" I prayed, keeping my eyes on the well-fitting frock coat in the cab just ahead. "Lord, if I could get both copy *and* breakfast out of yonder bland, Asiatic smile—"

It was eleven o'clock in the morning. People with more money than appetite lined the café terraces, drinking things to make them hungry. Not of their kind was I. The foot race had turned me into a wolf. No appetizers for me! Fish, flesh, fowl and chateau dew—that is what I would take, *Seigneur*, if the gentleman from Asia cared only to treat me like a policeman! I was sorry he had not hit me under the chin. I could have bought the black man's diamond for what the Oriental had given the policeman. Then he had lied—egregiously lied, when he said he had aimed at the thief. He had wished the thief to escape; he had deliberately felled the policeman. I was sure of my psychology. I was equally sure that the bland gentleman's reasons for wishing the thief to escape would make gorgeous copy. Sewer despair was cheap. I dreamed of government secrets filched . . . and as I felt for "Mimi," a mental image of the black man feeling his diamond pin flashed through my brain; then another image of the black man as I had last seen him just as I jumped into the cab: the pin was no longer in his tie. Of that I was sure. Then the black image left me.

We rolled up the Avenue de l'Opéra, my cab just behind the one I had ordered my driver to follow. I noticed that the owner of the smart frock coat bowed to nobody. Nor did his eyes seem ever to follow up any lacework in the passing throng. He was looking straight before him. For the sake of my copy and my breakfast I hoped he yet smiled. We turned down the Boulevard de la Madeleine and stopped at the corner of the Rue Royale. If you have

ever been hungry in Paris and had a letter of credit, you will remember this corner. Nowhere else in the world can such good things be eaten. But it costs a louis to turn the doorknob. I had already spent two francs on the cab. Before I should risk more capital, I decided to find out if my gentleman was still bland. Touching him on the elbow as he was about to enter the café, I executed a certain highly complicated salute which the Prince de Sagan only (and myself at rare intervals) has ever dared to undertake. He turned, not the shadow of a smile on his lips. I think he was on the point of striking me. But long before I got through with my princely salute, the coveted blandness returned.

"*Tiens!*" he exclaimed, holding out the same kid-gloved hand that had struck the policeman. "*Tiens*—you have followed me!"

"I fancied we might have breakfast together," I confessed. Blandness left his face. I hastened to add: "You did a pretty thing down there by the Seine a while ago, a very pretty thing, I assure you. I thought I'd be delighted to have breakfast with you. I am not a spy. I never made any money I could keep. I am as hungry as the poor . . ." My voice had the cosmopolitan suavity, my face the cosmopolitan blankness which Parisians love.

The gentleman from Asia softened.

"Permit me," I begged, drawing his kid-gloved hand through my arm. "Permit me—to be led in to breakfast!"

He laughed, and I thought I had won.

II

My host's opulent appearance induced the *maitre d'hôtel* to show us into the snuggest little private dining room of the establishment. I had been there once before to interview the Prince of Wales—and I had not tarried. In this *cabinet particulier* waiters never said anything except "Yes, my lord." Snails, frogs, cuttlefish, antelope steak—anything! "Yes, my lord." And you got it. I thought not of copy. I proposed

to rise to the occasion and eat of the land and the sea, drink chateau dews, and thereafter burn incense to Asia. I was not a reporter but a prince in disguise—the Scotch-Irish Prince of Paris!

Save with our eyebrows we spoke little till we came to the salad; and then my host began with quite as clean a clip as he had given the policeman.

"You have an inordinate curiosity," he remarked, looking me squarely in the eyes. "Hasn't it got you into trouble before now?"

"Why before *now*?" I ventured, accepting one of his long Russian cigarettes. And I remember that as I lit the roll of tobacco my host's arm lay a moment over my heart, pressing poor "Mimi." To my question he replied with his eyebrows only. I took to my tongue, explaining:

"I could have walked the streets of Paris twenty years and never seen a gentleman free a thief by knocking a policeman down. Opportunities do not come every day—"

He started violently, pulled himself together, then remarked:

"But they always come. Opportunities have orbits—did you know that?"

I went back to my eyebrows.

"Certain opportunities," he resumed, "prefer certain men, certain blood, certain families."

"I do not quite follow you—"

"Most crimes are opportunities only—splendid opportunities that a sensitive organism cannot resist." He toyed with a small but heavy silver yataghan, with which the princely guests of this private dining room were supposed to fend any fish they might order to be boiled. But the weapon was big enough to fracture a reporter's skull. I drew back—to lengthen a trifle the orbit of a splendid opportunity. He smiled as if he had read my thoughts.

"How about good opportunities?" I queried, in an effort to feel comfortable. Those sleepy Oriental black eyes made me shiver. Then my host's lips twitched now, instead of smiling.

"The same thing," he replied. "You do good when an opportunity over-

whelmingly tempts you to do good. Look how I stopped the policeman! Men cannot resist an opportunity. Opportunity is not inclination. An opportunity is an operation carefully worked out by the forces above and lacking one thing only for its complete accomplishment—a human agent. The weight of this agent's little finger, the raising of his eyebrows, a glance—the event is accomplished; and comet-like the spiritual nebulae men call *opportunity* goes spinning off into space on an incalculable orbit, to return in six months, a year, twenty years, never perhaps in the first agent's lifetime, but in that of his son, his grandson, or his great-grandson. Opportunity—this demon of an *opportunity*—is what men ought to fight, not the demon's irresponsible agents. Opportunity, not the thief, is what ought to be crucified."

I felt easier. My host was now examining a gold salt cellar. He could not have quickly assassinated me with a salt cellar, even though it was of gold.

"Do you exonerate all criminals as being irresponsible agents?" I asked.

"All except those who manufacture their opportunities, and such criminals are the demon himself. They are passing rare. Few men on this earth have ever forged an opportunity either for evil or for good. In the latter case, it is God himself working in the form of a man; in the former, you have to do with the demon in person."

This was all so encouraging that I asked him to give me another cigarette.

"Did you ever have an opportunity?" he inquired. And his eyes looked glassy.

"Not of the good kind," I laughed.

"Nor of the evil variety either," he guessed. "But be on your guard! Even now a nebulous accretion may be sweeping toward you, rounding out an orbit that laps back a hundred years. Do you happen to remember whether your great-grandfather ever committed theft?"

My eyebrows went up to where my hair used to be.

"Mine did," the Oriental continued.

"My great-grandfather was crucified for

theft. That is how thieves used to be punished in my country."

"A bit unpleasant," I managed to say.

"Rather. My grandfather witnessed the execution. He told my father. My father told me. Would you like to hear about it?"

I had just reached my coffee, after eating the biggest meal of my life. The Oriental's sleepy black-glass eyes made me sick. I would not have listened to the story of his great-grandfather's crucifixion for all the copy in the world . . .

"I used to feel that way," he volunteered, easily reading my thoughts. "But as I grow older I like to think about it. I inherited the estates that my father and grandfather afterward managed to accumulate; but I inherited also my great-grandfather's"—he paused an instant to study my circumflexed eyebrows, then completed—"my great-grandfather's *orbit*!"

I jumped. Then a sensation of loathing crept over me. I had interviewed many a criminal in my time, taken down the last blasphemies of some half a dozen murderers condemned to be guillotined, and rubbed shoulders with traitors to their country; but for some reason the thought of having eaten that frightfully expensive breakfast in the company of both a self-confessed thief and the great-grandson of a crucified thief got on my nerves. If I had had money enough to settle the bill, I should have rung for a waiter at once and retired to the other bank of the Seine; but that breakfast we had eaten would run up into the hundreds. Accordingly I stared only, and got sick. My host seemed hurt rather than angered by the thoughts my face expressed.

"All the same," he complained, "you might have listened with a better grace than that! You don't eat as good a breakfast as this every day." And he rose to his feet with a sigh. "Here," he continued, dropping his red pocketbook on the table, "will you kindly settle for our breakfast while I am in the cloak-room?" He rang for the waiter as he left the room.

III

SICK as I was, I diagnosed the situation. Had I not worked up such things a hundred times into good copy—the well dressed gentleman who retired at the end of a meal, leaving his dupe behind to settle the bill? But I did not stir from my seat. The waiter found me holding my head.

"Did my lord ring?" he begged to know. I noticed he was running his eyes over the table and about the room.

"Bring me the bill," I gurgled, feeling for my cardcase. I had a few blank cheques on the Crédit Lyonnais; in that bank I had a few hundred francs that I had saved up for a rainy day. The rainy day had come. But my cardcase was evidently in the other pocket—No! And even "Mimi" was gone—poor old black faithful "Mimi," the fountain from which all my inspiration flowed! Steal "Mimi" . . . I should have relished the story of his great-grandfather's crucifixion and his own, too!

At that moment the waiter returned with the *maitre d'hôtel*. The eyes of this latter whirled about the room even more quickly than those of his subordinate had done. Then he began to write on a long strip of paper. Figures—*là là!* I began to wonder if I had enough in the Crédit Lyonnais to silence all the curlycues he was dashing down. Leaving the figures, my eyes came back to the red pocketbook; and to save my benighted soul, I could not help grinning as I thought of the policeman. How exuberantly joyful the policeman had been to receive that blow on his Adam's apple and thereafter a package of *counterfeit* banknotes!

I was as sure of my diagnosis as I was of my existence. The gentleman from Asia had cleaned out my account at the Crédit Lyonnais and stolen "Mimi" as well as my cardcase; but he had not hit me on the Adam's apple. Then I had had a good breakfast. I grinned at the thought of the policeman's gratitude. I made up my mind I would look him up and give him the red pocketbook to keep his pretty banknotes in. Reaching over, I took with a

sigh the red morocco thing, still bulging with what, I felt sure, was counterfeit money—the kind Parisians call the *money of St. Farce*.

My first surprise was when dear old "Mimi" came tumbling out, and I kissed her in my joy—you see, *she* gave me that fountain pen! Then came an enormous diamond pin that I did not kiss, since I instantly recognized it as being the one that had constituted the morning joy of my dark friend from New Orleans.

"My lord—"

The *maitre d'hôtel* was bowing to the floor, yet managing at the same time to hold out a silver tray on which reposed his long slip of paper.

"My lord the Duke—" he said, bowing lower and lower, but raising the tray higher and higher.

Encouraged by "Mimi" and the New Orleans pin, I glanced at the bottom of the strip of paper and gasped.

"Fourteen thousand, three hundred and sixty-seven francs!"

"My lord the Prince will observe," the *maitre d'hôtel* begged from somewhere near the carpet, "that the precious silver antique yataghan and the precious gold salt cellar have been sold to him twenty per cent. cheaper than any jeweler in Paris could have furnished them. The royal ruby coffee spoon has also been discounted—"

The only thing that kept me from going into a faint was the stimulating scintillation of my erstwhile running mate's diamond. It was not mine, but it would keep the *maitre d'hôtel* from calling in the police. You see, I doubted to the last. The presence of "Mimi" and the diamond pin ought to have made me reject my first hypothesis. But men like to cling to their false reasoning. It was only when the *maitre d'hôtel* got to putting adjectives onto my titles and comforting me with the story of a wretchedly small Hindoo potentate who had carried off the napkins and tablecloth—it was then only that I noticed for the first time a pretty blue glint showing on the red where the capacious pocketbook folded. It was the difficult blue glint of the Bank of France. I jerked the folding pocket

open. Crisp good money, an inch thick! And French banknotes, you will remember, are passing thin. The vein was a quarter of an inch thick after I had paid the bill and rewarded the *maître d'hôtel* for the titles he had bestowed.

IV

NEXT day I found the policeman, and we compared notes. As representative of the law, this good man decided that we should deposit the diamond at headquarters and institute search for the gentleman from New Orleans, not from Asia. But even the African had disappeared. The police traced him to Constantinople, from there to Vienna, from Vienna to Madrid, and then lost sight of him for good. The time prescribed by the law having expired, the diamond

was returned to the good policeman and myself. He had left the force, and was now keeping books and acting as sacristan for a convent on the Rue Notre Dame des Champs.

"What shall we do with the diamond pin?" he asked.

"Sell it," I suggested. "And we'll celebrate the anniversary every year by having breakfast together over on the Rue Royale!"

"Don't you think it would be better if we had a mass said for his soul every All Saints' Day?" the ex-policeman piously inquired.

"Whose soul?" I asked. "The African's or the Oriental's?"

"Neither one," whispered the sacristan, awed by my lack of religious training. "I mean the great-grandfather—the one they crucified for stealing!"

And I agreed.



THE REPORTER—AN ASSIGNMENT

By Paul Scott Mowrer

THE fifth house from the corner in this row—
 Little black tents against the night sky's indigo.
 Beside the door I flashed a match to find
 The number right—and sudden blankness took my mind!

I hesitated, peering from the gloom
 Beneath the shade into the yellow-lighted room,
 Curious justly, in my errand's name:
 And then I blamed myself, though I was not to blame.

A woman sat beside a table spread
 For one, but suppertime was hours past; her head
 Bent low for listening, while at her thighs
 A sleepy child was frowning, gouging fists in eyes.

The woman stirred; I saw her young, worn face.
 She glanced, impatient, puzzled, at the empty place.
 I gulped, and knocked. God knows the words I said!
 I asked her, somehow, if she knew that he was dead!

HER LAW

By Leila Burton Wells

"I GUESS," said Raynor, turning his kind eyes to the new hired man, who stood by the door awkwardly twirling his hat between his huge hands—"I guess I'll go out and see to the cattle myself tonight—and start you in in the mornin'. Mary," glancing at his wife, as he took his cap from the peg near the kitchen door, "you give—give—" He paused, regarding the newcomer interrogatively. "You ain't told me your name yet."

The man was silent.

"If you have, I can't just call it to mind."

Still the man was silent.

"You ain't deaf, are you?" with sudden, almost foolish fear.

A saucepan which Mrs. Raynor was holding fell with a clatter to the floor. A red flush swept to where the wavy hair crowded back from her brow.

"No—I'm not deaf."

"You ain't got any cause to conceal your name, have you?"

"No."

The word fell from his lips faintly, as if in giving voice to it he had used his last strength.

Raynor's first instinct was to think the best of every living thing. The most unruly animal, the poorest, weakest vegetable in his garden responded instinctively to his helping thought. He nodded to his wife, who was bending over the fallen saucepan.

"Give him some supper, Mary," he directed, "and he kin tell me in the morning."

The hired man raised his head.

"They call me Jack"—his voice broke shortly as he spoke the word.

Raynor smiled. "That's a good

enough name as far as it goes. Got any tail to it?"

The man opened his lips. "Ray," he said, his eyes on the woman. "Jack Ray."

"Say, that's funny." Raynor looked across at his wife. "I wonder if he's any kin to your husband's folks, Mary?"

Mrs. Raynor went over to the sink and turned on the hot water faucet. She did not answer.

"Same name," said Raynor explanatorily. "She was a widow when I married her. For land's sake," to his wife, "turn off that water; I can't hear myself think."

Mrs. Raynor wheeled suddenly, her back against the sink. She spoke as if every word were pushed from her mouth by a resistless internal force. "There—is—lots—of—Rays"—she fastened wide eyes on the new hired man; "I guess he ain't any relation to my people; he don't look nothin' like them."

"You can't tell by looks—" Raynor hesitated. "What part of the country are you from?"

The new hired man opened his lips as if to answer, but at that moment the woman, who had turned to the sink again, cried out. Her voice was strident with pain.

Raynor started forward.

"What is it?"—speaking in the angry tone of love lashed by fear.

She held out a shaking hand. "I scalded it," she moaned.

"Didn't I tell you to turn the water off?" He went quickly to where she stood leaning against the sink. "How in the name of all that's crazy did you do it?" he demanded angrily. Then,

in a softer tone: "Sit down, honey, sit down."

He pushed her into a chair, holding the scalded arm in his great tender hands. The hired man still leaned against the wall. Mrs. Raynor tried to hide her arm in her apron.

"It isn't anything," she gasped. "Don't get excited now, Hiram—it ain't good for you; besides, you've got to see the cattle—"

"I guess you come before any cattle that ever poked a head into this world. You just turn that water off, will you, Ray, and hand me the sody off the shelf in the closet—no, the other way. What shelf is it on, Mary?"

The woman did not answer; she leaned her head against him and began to cry.

"I guess it hurts her pretty bad," said Raynor excusingly to the other man. "She ain't one to whimper. It'll be all right in a minute, Mary."

The new man was fumbling among the cans on the shelf. He came slowly to where they stood, with a package in his hand, holding it toward Raynor at arm's length. Mrs. Raynor pressed her face closer against her husband's coat. He was fondling the scalded arm.

"You pour it on," he said to the other man. "I don't know how in the name of common sense she done it. She must hev stuck her hand clean under the faucet."

The hired man awkwardly held the package of soda over the blistered arm. The flesh seemed to shrink as the soft powder fell upon it. The woman could not suppress a little moan.

"It'll be better in a minute," her husband comforted tenderly. "I've got to go and see to the cattle while it's light. You get some rags, and he'll help you wrap it up"; indicating the silent stranger with a jerk of his elbow.

Going over to the door, he again took his cap from the peg. As he turned, the light from the swinging kitchen lamp above their heads fell on his face. His wife started forward with the protecting instinct of a woman who has loved and nursed.

"I oughten' to have done it," she

wailed self-accusingly. "The doctor said you mustn't be excited. I oughten' to have done it."

Raynor smiled his whimsical, good-natured smile.

"I reckon you didn't especially order the scalding," he remarked humorously. "You just wrap up your arm now—I won't be gone a minute. Perhaps you and Ray there kin find you've got some relatives after all; it ain't such a common name, by no manner of means."

He opened the door and stepped out. A gust of furious wind swept through the little kitchen.

"Looks like a storm," he warned, putting his head inside again. "You'd better close down everything."

Mrs. Raynor nodded dumbly. She watched the spot where his head had disappeared for long moments, as if she feared to move. The wind was picking at the swinging shutters outside, but in the kitchen the ticking of the clock could be heard above the noise of the elements, so taut was the attention of the two people who stood facing each other there.

When the woman moved, it was automatically. Slowly she turned her eyes in her head, as if to look again at something she knew she must face yet feared to see.

Still the clock was ticking—to her tortured sense the fairylike sound was as the clash of hammers. One, two, three; one, two, three; one . . .

She screamed aloud. In the dead silence the sound of her voice was hideous. The man said "Hush" instinctively. Still neither moved. In Mrs. Raynor's eyes fear was giving place to a living, writhing agony. She went over the features of the man's face, faultlessly placing each one. There was no mistake!

"It is true," she asserted in a whisper, moving for the first time. "It is true!"

The man nodded.

She flung her hands above her head with a gesture of horror, and the wounded arm striking her forehead roughly, she shrank, crying out again, as a person cries who is near hysteria.

The man stared at her.

"You burned—it—on purpose," he stammered, pointing to her arm.

She bowed her head.

"I was afraid—you would *tell*."

Again they both heard the ticking of the clock.

"You're his wife?"

"Yes."

"You *married* him?"

"Yes."

"How did you come to do it?"

The question was asked in a conversational tone, but the note in it was so terrifying that the woman's heart stopped beating for a moment, and then began to pound against her side like a galloping race horse.

"I thought—"

"Yes."

"I thought—"

Ray stirred for the first time. Like some huge beast of the jungle, the muscles moved and trembled under his flesh. He advanced toward her, passion making havoc of his features. She shrank away—back, further back, against the wall. He caught her red and blistered wrist in his hand. She cried aloud in physical pain, her mental tumult for the moment stilled.

"I thought you were dead"—she screamed out the words—"I thought you were dead!"

"God!" He was staring in her face.

"I thought you were dead!"

"I'm not, though—I'm *alive*! I'm here! Here, holding you—"

Her fear-stricken eyes hung to his face. "How did you come—how did you know?" she wailed.

"*He* came to the intelligence office asking for a man to work his farm while he was in the hospital; they recommended *me*; queer, ain't it?"

"Yes—it's queer—it's queer!"

"You belong to me—do you know it?"

"Hush!" She looked toward the door in terror. "You are tearing the skin off my arm—you're so *strong*! Oh, I had forgotten!"

"I'm sorry." He looked down at her flesh in awkward shame. It was red, and the burned skin was crumpled.

His mouth twitched. "I used to carry you," he said, struggling with his voice. "Do you remember? I used to carry you—just like a baby—I was that strong."

"I know—"

"I used to say I'd drop you over the banisters—if you didn't behave. You was dead set on my carrying you up the stairs—do you remember?"

"Don't! Oh, *don't!*"

The man put his hand over his forehead as if dazed. "I don't seem to get it quite straight yet—my wits always were slow, you know; I don't seem to understand."

"You can't understand," the woman wailed. "Nobody could understand how such a thing could be! It ain't right! It ain't right o' God to *let it be*! Listen!"

She clutched his arm.

Above the rattle and rush of the wind came the sound of a human voice.

"He's calling the cattle," she said in an awe-struck whisper. "He'll be in in a minute. You mustn't *tell* him"—clutching his arm; "it would kill him."

"Is he any better'n me? *Is* he?"

"I know—but he's sick; the doctor says any shock will finish him! Jack," with a cry of anguish—"it's horrible, ain't it? It's horrible!"

"Why didn't you write to me?" asked the man dully. "I lay there in them ice fields a-digging for gold, and waitin' and watchin'."

"I wrote"—her voice trembled—"but you didn't answer. I sent the letters to the address you left me."

"I never got them," said the man, with dumb rebellion against fate in his voice.

"Then"—she swallowed pitifully—"the flood came and our place was swept away—and I moved here."

Again the awful silence of impotence fell upon them. The woman leaned back against the wall and began to pluck at her apron. "Why didn't you come home sooner?" she wailed. "Why didn't you come?"

"I was waitin' to strike it rich."

For a moment she stared in his face, and then she threw back her head and

laughed. Peal after peal of almost maniacal laughter rang through the room.

"Hush!" The man caught her arm.

"Waitin' to strike it rich!" she screamed. "That's it! That's what done it to us. You weren't satisfied to be *happy*. You wanted to go grubbing for the gold what's in the ground—and I *let* you! I guess God's punishing us now. Wantin' to strike it rich—and me a-havin' to give myself to another man!"

"Curse you!" cried the man, starting toward her—his blood aflame.

She shrank away. "I thought you were dead!" The old cry.

"Where's your wedding ring?"

She hid her hand under her apron. He wrenched it out.

There was a plain gold band on her finger. "Whose is it?" he demanded in an awed voice.

She averted her face.

"Where is *mine*?"

"I put—it—away."

"And my"—his voice broke—"my baby! My little kid!"

"She didn't live more'n a year." Writhing pain and protest were beginning to beat against the woman's voice. "The mounds and most of the headstones in the cemetery was washed away by the flood—I 'most lost my reason searching for her grave. Everything was swept away from me—everything—everything!"

The man sank down on the bench by the wall and uttered a guttural, passionate cry that struggled through his chest and seemed to rend his throat! He was such a huge creature that his pain filled the little room. He dropped his head, and his hands hung down between his legs. He fingered his cap, turning it round and round.

"I went there," he said thickly, "when I came home. Grass was growing up in the place where the house had stood—nobody knowed nothin' of you—everything was changed. I was like a crazy man then; I used to sit there in the sun on a pile of boards—and *think*. I can't think very fast—but I pieced it all together: I told myself you'd gone in the flood—like many

another good woman, with your baby in your arms. I told myself everything but *this*—I couldn't '*think*' this. Not this!"

The woman covered her face, rocking to and fro. "Why didn't you send me word?" she wailed. "Why didn't you? How dared you leave me without a word?"

He lifted his haggard face. "The first year," he explained painfully, "I got no chance—we was where there weren't no mails. After that, when the snow thawed and I came down a little—expecting to get a bunch of letters from you—I found nothin'. Then I wrote, but I got no answer to my letters. They were returned 'unclaimed.' I struggled on, trying to make enough to get home—but it weren't no use; luck was against me—"

Tears trickled through the woman's slim, toil-worn fingers. She made no effort to brush them away. Her grief was soundless now, and more terrible to look upon.

Ray watched her in silence. She hadn't changed much; the heavy red-brown hair was knotted as of old behind her head, and its very weight pulled it down about her ears so that it curtained her brow Madonna-wise. His great, awkward hands had so often thrust themselves among its folds! He could feel the clinging hair upon them now . . .

"Mary!" he said. "Mary!"

She did not move nor answer—only those silent tears slipped down and lay like fallen stars on her brown apron.

"It's true, ain't it?" he asked piteously. "You ain't making game of me, are you?"

"It's true." Her tone was mechanical.

Ray was a man drawn on majestic and simple lines. He had a few passions—the unexplained, unreasoning instincts of the beast. One of these passions woke within him now, that of possession. He looked at the woman sitting there—the woman who had lain in his arms, borne him a child; and nature shrieked aloud to him: "Take!"

He rose to his feet, his head almost touching the ceiling of the little kitchen: a beautiful creature from the standpoint of unconquered strength; a man who had "felt" without thinking. He put his hand on her shoulder—and his fingers closed like iron clamps.

She took down her hands and looked into his eyes.

"You're mine," he said, and his voice had in it the savage note of a jungle king.

"Jack!" She shrank away.

"Well, ain't you—didn't I have you first? Ain't you the mother of my kid?"

"Hush—not so loud."

"Why not so loud—ain't all the world got to hear it?"

"Hush! *No*—oh, don't look like that! You are hurting me! One moment—" She came close to him, putting her hands on his coat with the old childlike gesture. As she did so, like a tidal wave sweeping over her came the desire to rest as of old in his strength—to fling herself like a flower, windswept to the earth, on his great breast. The woman weakness that she had fought back for eight long years shook her to the very center of her soul. The man felt it, sensed the swaying of her whole being toward him.

He gave a cry, that was half a groan, and swept her roughly into his arms.

"You want me!" he cried exultantly.

"You want *me* back!"

"No!" She struggled, exerting her utmost strength, and yet scarcely stirring in his mighty grasp. "Hush—you mustn't!"

"Lie still." Closer the man bound her body to him. "Weren't you mine first? Ain't you my wife—*mine*?"

"No, no, Jack!" Her frail hands plucked at his. "You don't understand! What shall we do? Oh, what *shall* we do?"

"Kiss me!" said the man, putting his hands on either side of her head and forcing her face up to his.

"It will *kill* him!" wailed the woman. "Don't you see?"

"Let it—I'll tell him when he comes in. Kiss me!"

She screamed aloud, her eyes widening in terror.

"Wait—let me loose a minute! Listen to me, just listen!"

"You can't tell me that you don't belong to me. Which do you *love*—that's the question!"

"That isn't the question."

"What is the question, then?"

"What's *right*! We've got to do what's right."

The man gave a short, reckless laugh.

"Up there in the wilds—might is right!"

She stared up into his face. The straining of his arms around her whispered of his unbridled strength. In the old days she had often seen him tear a young tree up by the roots. . . . A cold perspiration broke out all over her body. She sagged in his arms.

"Let me loose, Jack—I can't breathe!"

Her hand dropped against him. She closed her eyes. Her helplessness woke the tenderness that ran through his nature like the sap in a giant tree. Slowly he loosened his arms; she slipped from them and stood at bay.

Outside the wind lashed the branches of the trees against the windows with wanton fury, and the old farmhouse creaked as with pain.

Fear had torn at the woman's face until it was fearful to look upon. Her hair, pressed close against her cheeks, fell far below her ears, and the loose knot hung to her shoulder. The cords in her throat were stretched taut, and her naked soul was looking from her eyes, peering piteously into a world of pain.

For long moments they stood face to face; then she said in a whisper: "Sit down—please." He made no movement, so she crept to him and pushed him down on the bench. There was no tension now in his huge frame. His arms hung helpless, but his eyes were on her face—always on her face. She knelt beside him.

"I don't know that I can explain very well," she said woefully. "It's all been so sudden—and there's so little time. But, Jack—we're strong, you and me. We've got the blood—the life in us, to bear things; but it ain't so with him. No, wait"—her hands held his down—

"let me explain—you can't understand. His mother took me in when I came here homeless—starving. They were good to me, and I worked for them; I learned to take care of him—he was sickly; and when his mother died . . ."

She paused, hiding her face against his arm. Ray was trembling, as a huge animal trembles in every limb with passion and rage and thirst. He tightened his fists, pressing them against his knees with a violence that would have wrung a cry of pain from any other man.

"Well?"

"It has been eight years—I thought you was dead. I couldn't hear anything from you—I owed everything to him. He *needed* me; and I—and I—oh, he's been like a child to me—just like an ailing child."

"Well?" Ray's voice was hard.

"Oh, don't you see—I can't *injure* him! It would be like striking a little one what was taking nourishment from my breast! He's only got a short time—one chance in a hundred, with this operation. Oh, I couldn't do it—don't you see, I couldn't do it! It would kill him."

The man did not move. "What's that to me? You don't have to be afraid—I'll do the telling!"

"No." She crept close to his knees now, flinging her arms around his neck. "Don't you see, we couldn't be happy—if you did it! We ain't ever done *wrong*! Things have been against us, but we've been good—we've been good!"

"What has being good ever done for us? Ain't we in hell both of us now?"

"Perhaps we ain't knowed how to be good *right*! My heart tells me it's got to come back to us some time—the good we do. The Lord says to 'wait'—and always I've been waitin'; I'm going to *wait* now, Jack, doin' the best I kin."

"How are you going to live with him then?" demanded Ray. "What *are* you? Answer me that! What *are* you to that man, with *me* a-livin'?"

She gave a heartrending cry and fell with her head on his knee. "I don't know what I am!" she moaned. "I don't know what I am!" Her own cry loosened the tears in her heart, and she

broke into wild sobbing. Her head slipped from his knee to the floor, and she lay there at his feet, he staring stupidly.

"I am a good woman," she protested; "I've always tried to be good—I've always tried—I always tried."

An emotion stirred in Ray—a strange emotion he had never known. He grew cold with the pain of it, as we grow cold before death. It was a tremendous thing, a giant force, invincible, inexorable.

"I don't know what to do now," moaned the woman, groveling on the floor. "I don't know what to do."

The man bent over her, that strange emotion washing his face whiter than paper. He lifted her up. His hands were cold with decision.

"Hush," he said; "don't cry."

She tried to check her sobs, but passed into one convulsion after the other. He lifted her in his arms—not as a man lifts a woman, but as he lifts a child. Her head hung over his arms weighed with its mass of red-brown hair. He pressed her sobbing body against him.

"I'm going to go away, honey," he said. He was walking with her up and down the kitchen as he would have walked with a child. "Don't you be afraid—I'm going to go away—I wouldn't hurt a hair of your head; and if *he's* the weak one, I guess it ain't in *me* to kill him off; *because I can!* I've always fought a man of my size. You stay here and be good to him—"

The woman's body shook and quivered in his arms. He put her on her feet, holding her up with his hands. "He needs you," he said, "and I can—wait; I'll get a divorce quiet; you needn't be afraid—"

His voice was almost drowned by a mad rush of wind. There was a lashing and tearing of the shutters and then a sudden patter of rain . . .

She stood stunned in the center of the room. He went to the window and closed it. Then he took up his cap.

She uttered a cry.

"Not in the storm," she moaned.

"I can't stay under his roof—"

She flung her arms about her head like one distraught. He came up to her.

"Steady, girl, steady!" That strange emotion of self-sacrifice was still controlling him. He took down her hands. "It ain't our fault," he said gruffly, "the fix we're in—but we've got to play fair! I'll have my eyes on you all my life, but you stay with him."

"I guess we've got to keep ourselves clean white, all through—fer the kid," speaking awkwardly. "I guess we'll get used to the pain after a while." He came close to her. "Will you kiss me, Mary?" he said. "Will you kiss me, once?"

With a cry she lifted herself, clasping him to her as a woman clasps her own. There was passion exalted in her touch. She pressed her lips on his—they were wet with her own tears; and silently, sacredly, the man took the wife in her to himself, and left the mother behind all white and merciful!

Then he almost threw her from his arms and staggered toward the door.

"Not in the storm!" she screamed.

He turned. "The rain won't hurt me—I've lain in snow up to my neck."

"Where are you going?"

"To stay around here a while in case you need me, until I hear how he comes out of the hospital—then I'll go West."

The woman stood where he had left her, unmoved. The wind and rain swept in through the open door, but she stood like one turned into stone.

A voice called her by name, but still she did not move.

"Mary!"

Her eyes opened, and she went slowly toward the door, moving like an old woman.

"What have you got the door open for?" Her husband, wet and wind-swept, staggered through the door—closing it behind him. He was deathly pale.

She looked at him in sudden fear, striving to collect her senses.

"Have you got any whiskey?" he gasped, sinking into a chair before the stove.

She flew to the cupboard. "What is it—the pain again?"

He nodded.

She poured out the whiskey with trembling hands, and slipping her arm around his neck, put it to his lips.

A groan burst from him.

"Is it bad?" she asked compassionately, pressing his head against her breast, as for so many years she had pressed it.

"It—will be—over—in a minute."

His eyes were closed. Slowly, heavily the minutes passed. Her arms began to tremble with his weight. He stirred a little. "Is supper ready?"

She tried twice to speak before her voice came. "It will be in a minute."

He lifted his thin face to hers; there were great hollows in his cheeks, and pain lay heavily in his eyes. "Where's Ray?" he asked.

Again the effort to speak hurt her. When she found her voice, it was like some alien thing she had snatched from another. "He wouldn't stay."

"Wouldn't stay?"

"He said—it wasn't—the kind of a place he wanted."

Raynor was silent; with the listlessness of one pain-numbed, he sat there for long moments, she mechanically stroking his hair.

"I thought he acted queer," he remarked at last, rousing himself.

Above the head that lay on her bosom she lifted an anguished face! He closed his eyes and leaned confidently against her as a child rests in its mother's arms, an utter weight. Mournful tears fell from her eyes onto his hair.

He looked up—"You've been crying?"

"It's—just my arm."

He sighed. "I suppose this means we will have to get another man," he regretted.

"Yes—" She pressed her cross to her bosom, heedless of the pain it inflicted. "Yes—this—means—we'll have to—get another man!"



BEWILDERMENT

By Victor Starbuck

THERE be many marvels in life
That well-nigh drive me to madness.

The marvel of them that move unseen
Behind closed doors and shuttered windows;
Of faces that pass in the street and are forgotten;
Of footfalls heard in the night;
Of flying ducks that cry in the darkness,
That cry and pass forever.

The marvel of what was before things began,
And of what shall be after things shall cease;
Of the stars that light the darkness,
That shine and give no answer to the weary heart.
The marvel of moonlight on moving waters,
Of tall, crested pines in the moonlight . . .
Of a city seen through the rain.

The unspeakable wonder of children,
Who come we know not whence and presently depart we know not whither;
The marvel of the sea.
The marvel of empty freight cars on a siding;
Of ships in the offing;
Of dawn and dark;
Of the mystery that lies beyond the bend of the road;
The marvel of the surpassing loveliness of women.

Yea, there be many things that bring me near to madness
(For me God made with madness in my blood—
With the madness that always asks and eternally finds no answer)
But that which comes nearest to breaking my heart with its beauty
Is the wind on a clear day
Blowing swiftly over a field of brown sedge,
With the slanting sunlight upon it,
And the white clouds sailing above it,
With their swift-moving shadows.

THE INNER HOUSE

By Edward Ashbrook Briggs

SHORTLY before high noon Evelyn Churchill came out into her vine-clad porch and plucked a late wistaria bloom from its leafy screen. A long French window served as mirror, and standing before it she fastened the bit of color in her hair and smoothed her skirt critically before she descended the steps. She was on her way to a wedding three doors away. Despite her rustling lavender perfection and the June brightness of the day, Miss Churchill acknowledged a sense of unrest.

The feeling persisted even when she had entered the hushed expectancy of the marriage parlor; and the low-voiced ceremony served only to augment it. Long before it was over she surrendered to an unhappy introspection, a mood more searchingly personal than that of the loneliest midnight hour she had ever known. She lost all sense of kinship with the waiting company; her eyes saw only the white figure of that wife-to-be. Searching mercilessly among the ebbings and flowings of her forty-six years, she admitted to herself that not one hour of her past had even glimpsed the goal now being achieved before her.

Her brain cried out the stubborn, rational "Why?" Her mind went back to her dressing room of an hour ago. She saw again in her mirror a quiet figure of middle height—mature, even a little stately; a figure thoroughly satisfying, she told herself objectively: it held a certain rich completeness of appeal. There was simple grace in the pose; the lines of neck and bosom could not be denied by their silken shield; the white-gloved wrist and forearm were sensuously turned. The face had gath-

ered from its years only a soft serenity; the heavy hair was touched only faintly with white.

In the time that followed the ceremony she moved and spoke, smiled and greeted, and harbored a haunting ache within her breast. In that gay assemblage loneliness was a phenomenon foreign and profane. But Evelyn Churchill met it there, and faced it as she had never really done through twenty years of quiet living in the house three ample lawns away. Her isolation went unshared; even Helen Warner, approaching alone, seemed stamped with the tangible escort of her absent husband. And Helen's tumbling words harped innocently on the hour's bitter theme:

"Hasn't it been perfectly lovely? Such a handsome bridal party! And the guests— Oh, Miss Churchill, have you seen Clayton Grayes? But you have, of course; why, he's a sort of old beau of yours, isn't he? I remember he used to—to—hover around you before he went to college. And just think—a novelist, and not yet thirty! His book is just out—I haven't read it, but all the critics write that it is quite—quite distinctive; so mature, you know, with such a real understanding of the heart, or something like that. And I can't see where he got the experience; he never seemed a bit in love with any of the girls here, and Charley says he had no college affairs. I think it's splendid, his succeeding at last. And it's rumored he has prospects, too: there's a New York widow—money, you know— Miss Churchill, you are feeling the heat, aren't you? It *is* warm, and I'm talking you to death! Here, let me—"

"No, no, thank you; I'll step outside, on the porch. I think I feel a little faint; the air— No, dear, don't come out! I'll sit over there at the end; there's a breeze stirring. I'll be quite myself in a moment."

Alone outside, Evelyn was surprised at herself, and annoyed; she had not suspected that the sickness of her spirit would so impose its pallor on the flesh. If her inner self could not remain concealed from the notice of such shallow eyes as Helen Warner's, it was unsafe to linger here, even on the empty porch. She stepped quickly down to the lawn and crossed the grass, a little guiltily.

She sat down in a secluded corner of her own porch behind the screen of a flowering clematis. For a time her mind was oddly empty, owning only to a sense of the vine-veiled glare before her and the near presence of living green things. Then the heavy, emotional wave began to surge again, invigorated now by a keener stimulus of mentality.

Figures were straying in the bright perspective across the level green. Even at that distance they still conveyed an impression of some completeness—some definite attainment—which she herself could not know. But they no longer drugged her reason with their variety of small personal appeals; she saw them as a body, as a unit to which her own state was violently opposed. And she tried to consider them rationally, carefully, as a feature of life outside her own experiencing conceptions. Outside! That was it! Between them and herself was reared an intangible barrier of difference of viewpoint. They did not think or feel or act as she did; their lives were crowded with sweet commonplace complexities—sympathies, concessions, small necessary bickerings, and the infallible comfort of mutual dependence. And herself! The overwhelming bitterness of her situation was its egoism. *Her* sympathies went out only to abstractions; her concessions touched nothing save her own mild will; the disagreements of her life were mere small psychological sallies against herself. As for dependence—her scheme of things revolved only upon her

house, her innocent luxuries, and the easy devices of her own brain.

A motor car bowled swiftly down the avenue. Almost before it had halted at the distant curb a surging chaos of figures linked it with the house. Their hilarious merriment rose suddenly across the lawns; the air about them clouded with driving showers of white. And as suddenly the crowd was disrupted, broken, and the car sped frantically away, miraculously festooned with tell-tale draperies. Two more lives were putting behind them the emptiness of mere self.

Behind the clematis a woman's brain flared into anger—anger at the interminable quiet upon which today's affairs had so suddenly intruded. She saw the peaceful town in its past—a past ruffled sparingly with similar occasions, as the calm of a forest pool is fretted now and then by the minute disturbance of a falling acorn—splashing, and vanishing, and forgotten. The local ripples of the wedding would lap a space upon the shores of current gossip, and then lapse back into forgetfulness. And the slow, tranquil living would go on and on, finding meager nourishment in its prim politenesses—monotonous receptions and somnolent afternoons at cards and stale, dull "party calls." The fullness of home life was for others, not for herself; she had only solitude. With a rush of fierce desire she wanted back her youth, that she might employ it as the town's younger generation employed it—dancing and flirting and marrying outside if they were girls, and striking forth with direct resolution if their sex endowed them with the stronger independence of masculinity. Today some of these had come back, innocent tormentors, to flaunt their tempting worldliness in the eyes of one, at least, of the prisoners of home.

Her dumb resentment demanded physical expression. She began to draw off her gloves, jerking pettishly at the buttons and straightening the fingers viciously. Abnormally critical, her attention centered upon the new exposure of her hands. Suddenly her eyes dilated in a kind of nervous terror. Was it the

yellow sunlight that cast so strong a tint across the whiteness of the skin? And the faint tracery of the life within—when had it so risen to proclaim the coming of a gnarled and blue-veined unloveliness! The ever-present comfort of the flesh, with its countless little satisfactions, was deserting her! She lay back impotently in her chair.

But underneath her crushed submission beat some sense of completeness that was almost a strange, contrary pleasure: she could be thorough, at least, and consistent; the cup was bitter, but she would drink it to the dregs. And with a kind of Spartan heroism she faced the future, dissecting it in all its revolting details, pondering them and classifying them in hopeless categories of accumulating miseries. She saw herself lonelier and grayer and more selfish; she saw her home a narrowing cell of inactivity, decreasingly visited by her neighbors, and ultimately housing only the mercenary ministrings of some paid "companion," moving to and fro among pillows and tea trays and omnipresent medicine vials. She saw her body withered, barren, wasted—no longer a comfort to herself, and unsolaced by any sense that it had been a happiness to another.

After a time she turned again to that appalling house of marriage. It might, it must have even further grim enlightenment to offer her. But such anticipations met a mild rebuke; the wedding guests had departed, and with them had fled the venom of their sting. Presently a little knot of last goers moved down the walk, halting at the avenue for a final separation. Clayton Grayes was among them. She recalled that it had been Helen Warner's foolish chatter of him and his affairs which had knocked the last stay from under her endurance and her composure. In her conception he was only a boy, belonging definitely to a changeless and satisfying past; but quite unceremoniously he had been thrust up and into the present, contributing his unconscious aid to the drawing of that curtain which could no longer veil her future.

Watching him now, she looked in vain

for the boy that had been. Pose and figure and a certain characteristic dignity were pleasantly unmistakable, even three lawns away; but something in them bespoke an intensifying into new degrees of confidence and poise. The dark uncovered head and the trim formality of the frock coat suggested nothing of the boy she had known.

He was just home from academy graduation, she remembered, when some local art club interest had sent him to her house, seeking access to old prints; and there had ensued two or three days of leisurely appreciation of the fruits of her dead father's hobby. Those days had led, quite logically, to a growth of friendship, and imperceptibly their hours together became a matter of course: evenings in her parlor, when she played the overtures of old operas; twilight drives on the brown wood roads that dipped to the river; tiny picnics even, delightfully unchaperoned, on the high serenity of Sunset Bluff.

It had all been so natural—and so innocent. His attentions were frankly persistent; he was solicitous even to the point of a kind of embarrassing eloquence; but—he was very much the boy. As for herself—she had not been unaffected by his flattering devotion, but her warmth had never pressed beyond those little fluttering tenderesses which the older woman is so prone—and so privileged—to feel for the youth who admires her.

And the tenderesses had been transient enough. When their object was removed they had readily transferred themselves to things less tangible, or had simply ceased to exist. He had not become to her anything vital. Letters had come from his freshman year at college. The next long holiday had taken him largely elsewhere; their correspondence languished; ultimately her memory had relegated him to the role of a one-time convenience, little more.

Now that she had sensed the evolution he must have experienced, she was curious to see him at closer quarters. She looked again toward the little knot of people. They had dispersed; the last carriage was rolling away.

But Clayton Grayes was coming down the avenue in the mottled sun-and-shadow of the maples. There could be no mistaking his destination. Through the clematis she watched the man helplessly, while mechanically her ear read into his footsteps a resistless rhythm. He was coming up her walk, his stick tapping lightly on the bricks; he was on the steps, and the wistaria hid him; he was in the portico—sudden, tall, appallingly near. She felt a flash of unaccountable fear. Yet still her mind hung in helpless indecision. He turned from the door and saw her; he was coming forward, hat in hand. She searched his face desperately. Perception told her of mingled expressions there, but intuition recognized only one chilling element—maturity. He had risen beyond her—she felt it; almost she began to hate it. And in a flash decision came to her: he was bringing her his triumph—in mockery.

She was standing, her hand extended, and she knew that she smiled. But while they exchanged greetings, and took their seats, and talked pertinent platitudes, something within her seemed to harden. She soon recognized that her part was not one of successful concealment. Conversation lagged. As a man of letters, she thought vindictively, her guest was surprisingly unresourceful. Unwillingly she approached the one subject which his personality suggested to her: he would talk, doubtless, of his achievements.

"Let me congratulate you on your success." Her voice was spiritless. "Hearsay attaches high value to your new novel. I must apologize for referring to a book I have not even seen, but—"

"You are perfectly pardonable," he said, with a quick attempt at brightness. "It is barely published, and I most certainly could not flatter myself that it has come to the notice even of those old friends who will so over-value—"

"And I am even more than typically behind the times. One becomes so, you know, when one is growing old."

His puzzled, amused glance flashed

over her whole person. She fancied that it rested an instant too long upon her hair.

"And I am gray, and dull, and quite hopelessly an old maid."

"At any event, your humor is just as it always has been," he said smilingly.

Her perversity was beginning to frighten her now, but she seemed powerless to check it. "*Everything* of me is just as it has been—my home and my looks and my life; only infinitely older and more faded and more profitless."

He leaned forward; his voice was suddenly very serious. "You are making it very hard for me. My mission, I mean. I came to you today with a mission, an obligation. I want to tell you something I thought to tell you years ago."

She met his eyes in distant inquiry. "Well?"

"I want to acknowledge a debt. I want you to know what you have—that you—I came to tell you that I *loved* you."

The full significance of the past tense did not strike her comprehension. She gave him a frightened look, that faltered and turned away. In bewilderment she bent her head and covered her face with her hands. Could it be that June was claiming her; that through the careless happiness of the season some tardy spiritual summer was rising tremulously? No, no; it was too late, too late . . .

He was speaking again. "I loved you years ago—that summer—you remember. It was a boy's love, but it was *love*. It was my awakening; I was never a child after that. I went away, and I became still less the child, for I came to know the human limitations even of so great a passion—"

Suspicion was growing upon her. "Why do you always speak in the past?" She had not raised her face.

His voice was infinitely gentle. "I thought you understood. I do not love you any more. I would give anything, everything, if I might; but I cannot."

The fall was brief, but it had its reviving shock. She looked up steadily. "Will you tell me the purpose of this?" she said coldly.

There was no hesitation in his voice. "I would thank you," he said simply, "for that which you have given me. I would thank you that I have loved a *woman*."

She had risen; her face was not good to see. "We need not continue this discussion. There is nothing—"

"No, no! Give me a moment—only a moment. I *must* make you understand." His hands were on her shoulders. She shrank from them, back into her chair. He began to speak hurriedly, pleadingly.

"We read Ibsen together, years ago. You remember 'The League of Youth,' and its preachment. I hated it then, and in my heart I denied its truth. But I cannot deny it now. Today, in that house, we saw two people wedded. They love each other—it is only just to grant them that—and they will live a life of harmony. But no one can prove that they love to the uttermost, or that their future will not come to rest on the mere comforts of existence. Perhaps they will know a surfeit of union. Yet separation could prove just as deadening—"

She threw out her hands in an angry, silencing gesture. "You say you loved me!" she cried bitterly. "You never did, or you could not come back to me now with—with this barren denial of your own love."

"Never loved you!" His words were impetuous. "Then what was it—tell me—what was it that lifted me out of myself in those wonderful nights behind Black Donald on the River Road? What was it gave me first to understand the miracle of music when you played for me? What was it that bared my eyes to beauty—all beauty, yours, your beauty of the flesh? What was it made my fancies sane and sweet, and moved me only to a passion for purity in my life—a life with you—"

"Stop! Stop!" Her blue-gray eyes were outraged. "You have no right—it is not just—or honorable! You only

mock the emptiness of what life has been for me! I have felt it myself, and now you mock me with it! You are cruel, cruel!"

"Forgive me!" he said, and there was a world of regret in his voice. "Forgive me for my clumsiness. If only I could find a way—"

"To convince me that a dead love makes a worthy mission!" she finished with curling lip. "I think a *man* would deem it best to keep silence!"

"I do not merit your rebuke," he said quietly.

"You do not love me!" she retorted.

"No," he said sorrowfully, "I do not love you any more. You cannot thrill me as you used to; the flame is burnt out—"

"Why did you come?" she said tensely. "Oh, why did you come, that we should bring each other such distress?"

"Time has killed the flame," he repeated, "but it cannot kill the clear purging which the flame has left! When first I loved you, I saw the sudden glory of beauty and honor and truth. I vowed to write; I promised it to myself and to you. My task was hard, but I came to know the ecstasy of effort. I countenanced no barrier; some day I would win success, and come and claim you. Until then I had no right—no right."

He was silent so long that she spoke sharply. "And do you call *this* claiming me?"

"How can I explain to you? When—when success began to promise, I found that—that I no longer wanted you as I had. I suffered; it tortured me. I no longer valued work—or myself. But I searched desperately for enlightenment, and I found it." His tone rose into steady conviction. "*You had given me a lasting ideal*. If you had been a shallow woman, or false, or weak, I should have fallen into a horrible cynicism. But I knew that you were true and calm. And that comforted me; it told me that I had won the best from my experience.

"*You* had not killed my exaltation; it had simply run its course; I had paid the toll of those who love to the uttermost. But I had *lived* to the uttermost. And

I cannot unlearn that lesson. And so I know that the barrier between us has been a rightful barrier; it has taught me—life. But it has offered you up as a sacrifice. Oh, I am sorry. But I had to tell you, to show you the wonder of the sacrifice you are. That is my reward for you—my pitiful thanks—just to let you know."

She was leaning back in her chair, her eyes closed. Deep in her brain some haunting self-accusation was struggling into being. She made one last attempt to quell it, to fight herself.

"Is it any reward that you have brought me? You are going back into what you have made your life. There is another woman in it—"

"That is slander!" he cried quickly. "There is no one. But if there ever is, I shall practise no deception; she shall expect only what I can give." His voice saddened. "I could not bring you anything more than what I have told you; you know it. I am sorry, sorry, that I can offer you so little."

Evelyn was silent.

"I am going now," he said. "I have made a bungling pilgrimage. But you will understand; I beg that you help me to prove my meaning to you."

She did not speak, nor move, nor open her eyes. She heard him lift his hat and stick from the table; she knew that he was standing before her. But she did not look at him; she raised her hands, and bent her face a little, and covered it with them. After a moment she felt his hands on the arms of her chair; he kissed her very softly on the forehead, between the slender fingers.

He was gone. She heard his footfalls on the steps, on the walk, on the flags of the avenue—receding, receding. They died away altogether. And she knew that he was gone out of her life. There would be no returning. Regret surged over her, and a wave of merciful shame.

Her loathsome despair of an hour ago rose before her, and she shuddered at its godlessness. Her spirit cowered and shrank, retreating into depth after depth of trembling humility. "*If you had been a shallow woman, or false, or weak . . . But you were true, and calm. . .*" The words scourged her. And he, his faith, his confidence! Out of his confessed failure—out of the ashes of his love—stood forth his risen ideal of life—an ideal of himself, of all conduct, of her, *even of her!*

For a long time she scarcely stirred. When at length she opened her eyes and was about to rise, she saw on the table at her side a flat package, neatly wrapped. When had he left it? She had not noticed it as he came. Carefully she unwrapped the book. Across the back, beneath the title, she read his name. Opening it slowly, her hand paused: in the center of the white page stood a simple, printed dedication:

TO EVELYN CHURCHILL

"*I am sorry that I can offer you so little.*" Yet here it lay, clear tribute from the essence of his life, mute eloquence to her, to all that knew them both, to all that turned the cover. . . . Her eyes burned suddenly with unwonted tears.

"*I will understand,*" her heart cried tremulously; "*I must; I will.*"

She went and stood at the top of the porch steps. The heat of the day was passing; up and down the level lawns the shadows were taking on a deeper hue. There was no wind, and the leaves were silent, but somewhere among the boughs a vireo was singing happily of summer. High against the infinite blue the maple tops were towering into beauty, speaking confidently of stillness and of heights. For a while she watched their sunlit quiet; then she gave herself, with something of a sense of peace, to the cool dimness of the inner house.



MOTTO for the "uplift" magazines: Even Reform finds it necessary to wear a slashed skirt nowadays.

THE GREEN-EYED MONSTER

By Adolph Klauber

CHARACTERS

FRANÇOIS RONALD (*a painter*)
FREDERICK NUGENT (*his friend*)
MRS. DORIS NUGENT
JENKINS (*RONALD'S man*)

PLACE: *New York City.*

TIME: *Late afternoon of a spring day.*

SCENE—*A studio in an old-fashioned house in the Greenwich Village section of New York. A door at the back admits into the studio from the hallway, which is reached by a short flight of stairs. Outlined against the door, which is of rich mahogany, a tracery of brass work may be observed surrounding a large elaborately carved lock from which a brass key obtrudes. To the right of the door under an electric light stands a large easel, against which rests a pile of canvases. There are also a table, a writing desk, a couch and a tabouret with smoking materials. To the left is a door leading presumably into the tenant's sleeping apartment.*

The rising curtain discloses RONALD comfortably spread out on the couch, while NUGENT sits at the table. A highball glass, about emptied, indicates the form of entertainment. Both men are smoking and, though apparently in argument, are obviously the best of friends. RONALD is a tall, dark, well proportioned young man, clean-limbed and fresh of complexion. His clothes are obviously made by a smart tailor. There is just an eccentric touch, however, in his soft collar and loose tie. NUGENT is short and inclined to be chunky, the result of good living. His complexion is sandy and his face slightly florid. He is the sort of man who takes himself rather seriously and may be easily aroused.

NUGENT

The trouble with you, my dear François, is that you have taken on the Latin temperament with your fancy cognomen. Before you spent a lot of time in the Quarter, and mixed up with those painter chaps, you were satisfied with simple fare, simple emotion and a simple name. In other words, you were

just plain Frank. Damn plain, too, if you'll pardon me.

RONALD

I can't see what that has to do with it.

NUGENT

Why, everything. You claim that jealousy is a natural emotion in every

man. I say it isn't. It's just sex exaggeration. But just because I insist that my faith is firm, that nothing, no combination of circumstances could induce me to believe ill of Doris, you tell me I'm either a liar or—what was it?

RONALD

Pardon me—I didn't finish the sentence. It wouldn't be pretty. I know you've got red blood in your veins.

NUGENT

Thanks for your confidence.

RONALD

Oh, you may laugh if you like. And I don't mind saying I believe if you ever did develop a jealous streak with regard to your wife you'd be a good deal of an ass. I've known Doris as long as you have. Maybe I know her a lot better.

NUGENT

It's wonderful how much some people do know.

RONALD

Not so very wonderful. Just natural. You see, you're only her husband. I'm her husband's best friend. I've a perspective on her.

NUGENT

Oh, come now. I haven't been married to her all my life, you know. I had the same sort of perspective before we were married, could see all her good points and—

RONALD

And all her faults.

NUGENT

Doris hasn't a fault that I know of.

RONALD

The perfect husband. Hurrah! I'll trade last when I see her again.

NUGENT

Not a chance on earth of that. She'd have nothing to tell you that could possibly be construed as a compliment.

RONALD

Maybe not. But you never can tell about a woman. She may see a lot in

me that isn't visible to the eyes of a mere male relative like you. Have another drink?

NUGENT

Thanks. I will. *(He pours some whiskey into a tall glass, then fills it to the brim with water from the carafe.)*

RONALD

Taking a bath? Say, that's Scotch, not violet ammonia.

NUGENT

It does look a bit thin. I really wasn't thinking. That is, I mean I was thinking, but not of what I was doing.

RONALD

That's bad. Reform while there is yet time. "Better one sinner that repenteth than—"

NUGENT

Oh, rot! Cut it out. What I meant was—I was wondering why it is that you fellows who go in for the art thing always get so badly bitten by the sex bug.

RONALD

Well, it's a mighty active little microbe.

NUGENT

Only because it has such good food to feed on. I can remember when things like that were only whispered, and then not in general circles. Maybe in an occasional smoking room story when the men got together.

RONALD

I know. But that was before the day of mixed bathing—

NUGENT

Say, can't you be serious? It's a pretty serious matter, you know.

RONALD

Oh, I know. And that's why you highly moral chaps make me so tired, objecting to plays with a purpose and books that are frank. It was all right as long as it was confined to a nasty story over the cigars. But now that a

few enlightened people like yours truly are trying to voice these things—not for idle gossip—but to benefit mankind—you're up in arms.

NUGENT

Well, why not? The doctors have been curing a lot of awful things for a good many years. That doesn't mean that we've got to drag out all the details in the plays and the novels and the family story papers.

RONALD

Maybe there wouldn't be so many things to cure if more of the details had been dragged out.

NUGENT

Oh, all right, Mr. Shaw—or who is it—Granville Barker? I'll go right down and buy a copy of the Brieux plays for Doris.

RONALD

Bet she read 'em before you did. Truth now, had you ever heard of Brieux until she talked to you about him?

NUGENT

No. Too busy with important things. I'm not a dawdler. (*He laughs.*) Say, how the devil did we get on this subject, anyway?

RONALD

Oh, via the green-eyed monster route. You may recall that before you had assimilated the larger part of my Scotch—

NUGENT

Hang it, I've only had two drinks. By Jove, you've got all the bad bachelor habits. Why not cultivate hospitality?

RONALD

Help yourself, old man. But—don't overdo it.

NUGENT

Never mind me. You look out for yourself. And, seriously, try to get rid of these crazy notions about love and marriage and jealousy and all the soul-mate stuff. Just remember, Doris and I are two fairly respectable, perfectly happy, healthy Anglo-Saxons. We knew our minds when we got married; we are

perfectly suited to each other, and entirely contented. And there's about as much chance of my being jealous of Doris as there is—well, as there is of any woman being fool enough to marry you.

RONALD

It's lucky for you I didn't try for Doris.

NUGENT

Oh, piffle!

RONALD

Have you ever noticed that strange, far-away look in her eyes when I'm sitting at the table with the two of you—that sort of yearning for the unattainable?

NUGENT

Say, you'd better knock off work for a while and take a rest. You're slowly—well, not so slowly but surely—going daffy. (*The clock strikes.*) Holy smoke! I've been wasting all this time with you, and I had a date with Primmins to play off that match. Too late now, I fear. (*He puts on his hat and coat.*) Why don't you learn to play golf?

RONALD

I will when I'm your age. Look at yourself, ancient one. Here you have an opportunity to improve your mind, and you go dashing off to chase a gutta-percha ball around the lot.

NUGENT

You're too infernally lazy, that's what ails you. (*He starts toward the door.*)

RONALD

Oh, well, have it your own way. Look out there! (NUGENT's foot encounters the pile of canvases stacked up against the easel. RONALD jumps up, rushes over and just saves them from falling forward.) Gee, but you're the bull in the china shop!

NUGENT

From what I've heard of some of the models, they might be rather fragile.

RONALD

Oh, cut the comic stuff. Just look out for those clumsy feet of yours.

You mighty nearly ruined a masterpiece.

NUGENT

Sorry. I'll try to be good next time. So long, old chap. I'll tell Doris you sent your love.

RONALD

Yes, and just say I'll dine with you Friday. I'd come sooner but—

NUGENT

That's quite soon enough. We'll both survive the delay. Good-bye, old chap. *(He comes over, pats RONALD on the back, and the pair shake hands.)*

RONALD

Ta, ta—and remember, beware of the green-eyed monster.

NUGENT

Rot! *(He goes out, slamming the door behind him. As he does so, the key falls to the floor. The light has gradually grown dimmer during this scene. RONALD draws the curtains, goes to the pile of canvases, selects one and places it on the easel under the studio light.)*

RONALD

By Jove, that was a close call! If he had ever seen this Doris would never have forgiven me. *(He switches on the electric light, which illumines the picture on the easel. It is the head of a beautiful woman, dark-eyed and dark-haired, with a complexion in pale olive tints and a neck and shoulders that gleam above the low-cut but entirely modish and proper evening gown.)* What a lucky dog he is! And the best of it is, he's absolutely right about Doris. I suppose there's another one like her somewhere, but I never happened to meet her—not since—*(He sighs.)* Oh, well, no use crying over spilt milk. *(The door knob is turned and then there is a knock.)* Come in.

JENKINS *(outside)*

I can't, sir; the door's locked.

RONALD

No, it isn't. *(He turns.)* Oh, I see—that fool lock. *(He goes over, picks up*

the key, inserts it, turns and opens the door.)

JENKINS *(entering)*

Sorry, sir.

RONALD

Oh, that's all right, Jenkins. Speak to the janitor about that crazy lock first time you see him. Better still, bring in a locksmith with you and have the thing changed. I spoke to your esteemed predecessor on the subject at least seven times.

JENKINS

Yes, sir. Certainly, sir. Never saw one just like it before, sir.

RONALD

No, I suppose not. It's one of those queer spring affairs. Relic of the Norman invasion of the lower West Side. To lock the door, take out the key. It's a paradox.

JENKINS

Yes, sir, quite so, sir. I packed the bag, sir, before I went out. Anything else, sir?

RONALD

You'll find a couple of letters on the table. Post them as you go out.

JENKINS *(crossing to the table; he picks up the two letters lying together, then notices a third)*

There are three, sir; this one isn't stamped. Do you want it to go?

RONALD

I only wrote two. Oh, yes, I remember. Mr. Nugent asked if he could use the desk while he was waiting. Let's see. *(JENKINS hands him the letter.)* Yes, that's his fist all right. Put a stamp on it and drop it with the others. I remember he said it was something urgent. You needn't come back till Monday. I'm off for Easthampton early in the morning. Good night. *(He goes into the bedroom.)*

JENKINS

Thank you, sir. Good night, sir. *(He opens a drawer in the desk, takes out stamps and affixes one to the letter. Then,*

crossing toward the door, he pauses before the picture on the easel.) The picture's coming on wonderfully, Mr. Ronald.

RONALD (*from within*)

What's that, Jenkins?

JENKINS

I say the picture of Mrs. Nugent is coming on wonderfully. Looks about finished now, sir.

RONALD

Yes. Pretty well. One more sitting Monday when I get back. That'll about do it.

JENKINS

Yes, sir, I should think it would, sir. It's lifelike now, sir. Just her expression.

RONALD

You're one of the best little critics, Jenkins. The very best. Constructive you are. You help build up one's self-conceit.

JENKINS

Oh, I shouldn't say that, sir.

RONALD

No, I dare say not. You shouldn't say a lot of things. But you do.

JENKINS

Yes, sir. Good night, sir.

RONALD (*with emphasis*)

Good night.

(The door slams as JENKINS goes out. There is a slight pause. Presently, RONALD, in a dressing jacket and with a pipe in his mouth, enters, goes to a shelf, takes down a book, draws up a comfortable chair and sits down to read. He turns on the table lamp, then rises, turns off the easel lights, and the room is now softly and pleasantly illumined by the one lamp on the table. As he is about to sit down again, there is a soft rap on the door.)

RONALD

The devil!

(The door is opened quickly and DORIS NUGENT enters just in time to hear the exclamation.)

DORIS

No. An angel. Come now, admit it; don't be rude.

RONALD

It seems to have admitted itself.

(She is a handsome woman, possibly thirty, though she would easily pass for twenty-five. She is nervous, excited, and shows signs of fatigue. She wears a long loose coat over an evening gown. RONALD is obviously astonished. But his natural breeding and easy manners prevent any awkwardness. He crosses quickly and takes DORIS's wrap.)

RONALD

It is a bit of a surprise, though.

DORIS

Well, of course. Now don't get any silly notions into your head, Frankie dear.

RONALD

Oh, never fear. What's the sad story? When did he begin to beat you?

DORIS

You goose! Don't imagine I'd come to you for sympathy. I know some nice men.

RONALD

Nicer than me?

DORIS

Yes, ungrammatical one. Heaps nicer. But, of course, you're all impatience.

RONALD

Not at all. You knew Fred was here, and you came to meet him.

DORIS (*flustered, rising quickly and darting toward the door*)

Fred here? Oh, my Lord! Get me out quick!

RONALD

Oh, he left half an hour ago. So, guilty woman, you're quite safe.

DORIS (*sinking into the chair again and drawing a long breath*)

My, how you startled me! I thought for a moment—but never mind. (*Glanc-*

ing at the easel) What's the picture doing there? Now, Frankie, you haven't been showing it to Fred?

RONALD

Of course not. (*He glances around, picks up a piece of drapery and throws it over the canvas.*) Say, I'm getting tired of being regarded as a semi-idiot by the Nugent family. First Freddie comes and rags me about you, and now you—

DORIS

It's the picture I came to see you about.

RONALD

I am crushed. For a moment I really thought that I was the object.

DORIS

Listen. I can't stay more than a minute because Fred'll expect to find me when he gets in. We're dining with the Stapletons. He'll ask questions, and I'll make a mess of it if I try to lie to him. I always do.

RONALD

What, after all that practice?

DORIS

Oh, do be serious. The fact is, I've had a wire from Helen. She's in some sort of a stew about that old property of ours down at the shore, and I've got to run right over to Boston first thing Monday morning, see her lawyer and sign some foolish papers.

RONALD

Oh, you want me to be your traveling companion!

DORIS

No; the whole thing bores me enough as it is. I won't need any additional burden. You told me, though, that you'd have to have one more sitting. Well, I knew you were off for Easthampton in the morning. I tried to 'phone, but Central said the wire was out of order, or something. So I thought the quickest way— Oh, dear me, I'm all out of breath; I ran so fast.

RONALD

Ran?

DORIS

Yes. The car's being overhauled. I thought I'd pick up a taxi, but none came along.

RONALD

Well, rest a minute. (*She is about to speak.*) No, not a word. First, you looked like a lobster. Now you're as white as a sheet.

DORIS

Whew! I do feel queer. Oh, dear me, what can be— (*She collapses in a dead faint.*)

RONALD

Holy mackerel! She's fainted. (*He reaches for the cafe, half fills a glass and bathes her face. She breathes heavily, but there is no sign of returning consciousness. He crosses over and opens the window.*) A little fresh air may help. This is a fine situation. Seems to me I've heard of something that'll bring back a fainting woman immediately. Let's see. Oh—tickle the soles of her feet. (*He kneels down and removes her shoes, but there is no movement.*) That's no good. (*After a moment's thought*) Now I remember. A cold key. (*He goes to the door, takes the key out of the lock and hurries back to DORIS's side. Then he raises her slowly from the chair, and with one arm still supporting her, manages to drop the key down the back of her neck. DORIS gives a little flutter and slowly opens her eyes.*)

DORIS

Where am I?

RONALD

Never mind. You've said exactly the right thing. And without a rehearsal. Whereupon I answer "In me power, fair lady."

DORIS

I must have fainted.

RONALD

Perfect deduction. But why run all the way and get yourself into such a state?

DORIS

Oh, you don't understand. Fred's so fussy. He's always imagining things.

RONALD

Not jealous?

DORIS

No, not exactly. But, you see—

RONALD

Ha, ha, ha! Oh, yes, I see. And just a little while ago he was saying that of all the mean passions of men jealousy is the worst. Sex exaggeration he called it.

DORIS

Yes. I know. That's just like the darling. He doesn't know it himself. But he's always asking questions. "Where were you?" "What kept you so long?" "Who was there?" Thinks it's just natural interest in my welfare.

RONALD (*laughing*)

Same old green-eyed thing.

DORIS

Never mind. Don't you laugh at my Fred. I'd hate him if he didn't. How is a woman to know whether a man does care if he doesn't show it?

RONALD

By jealousy?

DORIS

It's a sure sign of devotion. (*There is a step in the passage—a knock at the door.*) Oh, my Lord, who's that?

RONALD

Haven't the slightest idea. Jenkins, maybe. (*There is a double knock.*)

NUGENT (*outside*)

Let me in.

DORIS

What in the world—

RONALD

S-sh! Be quiet. Maybe he'll go away.

DORIS

Why should I be quiet?

RONALD

Remember the green-eyed monster.

DORIS

Oh, nonsense.

RONALD

But you said—

DORIS

Never mind that. I was joking. And of all persons! You goose, do you suppose Fred would suspect me with you?

RONALD (*preening himself*)

Oh, I don't know.

NUGENT (*loudly, dictatorially*)

Open the door.

DORIS

Open the door. Don't be silly.

RONALD

Oh, all right. (*He crosses to the door, then stops suddenly.*) That's funny. Where the deuce is the key? (*He bursts out laughing.*)

DORIS

Stop that. Hurry and open the door.

NUGENT

Let me in—let me in, I say. I hear you.

RONALD (*laughing*)

Oh, all right. Wait till I get my breath.

DORIS

Have you gone mad?

RONALD (*doubled up with laughter*)

I can't open it till I get the key. Give it to me.

DORIS

What are you talking about? I don't know anything about your old key.

RONALD

It's down your back.

DORIS

What!

RONALD

I dropped it in when you fainted.

DORIS (*screaming*)

Oh, you stupid! Quick! Get it out! (*NUGENT is pounding violently, crying out loudly for admission, with threats to break down the door.*)

RONALD (*crossing to DORIS*)

I'll do my best. (*He reaches down into the back of her bodice.*) Where is the blooming thing?

DORIS

Stop—you're tickling me. (*She turns quickly. The sudden action causes several of the hooks to open, thereby disarranging the neck of the bodice.*)

RONALD

Well, I didn't mean to. Hold still, or I'll never find it. (*In his effort to locate the key, and in her struggles to help him, she is standing uneasily, and he has one arm around her waist to support her. In the meantime his hand is down the back of her bodice vainly fishing for the key. At this point the lock gives way, the door flies open and NUGENT, red-faced and breathless, bursts into the room. The picture that meets his eye would not be reassuring even to the most unsuspecting of husbands.*)

NUGENT (*sinking limply into a chair*)

My God! (*He recovers himself quickly and rushes at RONALD with fist upraised.*) You damn scoundrel! You—you—

DORIS (*throwing herself between the two men*)

Fred, don't be silly.

RONALD

It's easily explained.

NUGENT (*in tears*)

Explained! Good God! I find you two together—like this—you refuse to let me in! (*He is doing a sort of war dance, and he stumbles over DORIS's shoe; he quickly takes in the fact that she is in her stocking feet.*) Why didn't you finish dressing while you were at it?

DORIS (*now thoroughly angry*)

Oh, why didn't you give me time? (*She reaches for her shoes.*)

NUGENT (*explosively*)

Why, you, you—

RONALD

Don't finish. You'll be sorry.

NUGENT

Mind your own business. (*He pulls himself together and speaks with great dignity and calmness to DORIS.*) I'll say what I have to say at the right time and in the right place. Put on your shoes and come home at once. (*DORIS flops to the floor and begins putting on her shoes.*) Home—great God! (*He bursts again into tears.*) As for you—damn you—I'll— (*He is too overcome to finish the sentence.*) I'll wait downstairs.

DORIS (*evidently affected by his emotion*)

No, you won't, you old Toodles, dear. (*She rises; she has on one shoe only.*) You'll stay right here and listen. Frankie is painting my portrait for your birthday gift. We were both set on the idea of giving you a nice little surprise. Well, it was to have been finished after one more sitting. That was to be on Monday. But that trip of mine to Boston cut in. And as I knew Frankie intended going to Easthampton tomorrow, I ran over to ask him if he wouldn't postpone it and give me a final sitting. Otherwise the portrait couldn't be finished on time.

RONALD

Yes. And by way of corroborative detail—there's the portrait. (*He switches on the easel light and removes the drapery.*)

NUGENT (*cynically*)

Very neat. If you don't believe I shot the bear I'll show you a picture of the gun. But why was the door locked? Why didn't you let me in?

RONALD (*bursting into laughter*)

Oh, that's the best joke.

DORIS

Frankie, be still.

NUGENT

I'm waiting.

RONALD

I couldn't open the door. You know all about that fool lock. Well, Doris has the key.

NUGENT

Hiding behind her skirts, eh? "The woman tempted me." You coward!

RONALD (*with mock gravity*)

I return your insulting letter unopened. Doris, explain.

NUGENT

That reminds me. I came for my letter. It was urgent.

RONALD

I know. I had Jenkins mail it. You owe me two cents.

NUGENT

I'll pay you everything I owe you, never fear.

DORIS

Oh, stop, you two. You're absolutely silly, both of you. Now listen, Fred dear.

NUGENT

Don't "dear" me.

DORIS (*tantalizingly*)

Fred dear, dearest, I ran all the way, tired myself out and fainted. This brilliant person dropped the key down my back to make me come to. It's there now.

RONALD

I was trying to find it when you came in. I'll get it now.

(*He goes over to DORIS and is about to put his hand into the back of her bodice, when NUGENT quickly intercepts and grandiloquently waves him aside.*)

NUGENT

Your assistance isn't wanted. (*He* your wife.

CURTAIN.

runs his hand into the bodice, and quickly withdraws it.) A pin—damn it!

RONALD

Oh, Freddie, such language!

NUGENT (*making another plunge; this time he brings up the key, and eyes it quizzically*)

Well, I'm jiggered!

RONALD

There, I told you so. The key.

DORIS (*with a comprehensive gesture*)
—to the whole situation.

RONALD

And he said nothing could make him jealous.

NUGENT

Of course not. I knew it all the time.

DORIS (*bursting into tears*)

I'll never forgive you. (*She sinks into a chair and begins to lace her shoe. RONALD kneels and is about to assist, when NUGENT shoves him aside and is for doing it himself. DORIS is sobbing.*)

Go away! I hate you! I'll never forgive you.

RONALD

Oh, yes, you will. Remember, it's a sign of devotion.

NUGENT

Dry up, you!

RONALD

Oh, you green-eyed monster! Kiss



MORE men would be Prohibitionists, only they don't like cloves.



WAITER—A man with a number and a fortune.

BEANNACHT LEAT—MY BLESSING WITH YOU

By Donn Byrne

WELL, woman o' the house, I'd best be going.
I'm sure you like to have me, but you see
The day might come, you never can be knowing,
When you'd wish you hadn't laid your eyes on me.

And so tonight I'll cross the stormy water
And seek my fortune in the foreign war.
I'll marry surely with some high king's daughter
And ride around inside my coach and four.

Ay, and maybe in the journals of the time
You'll read accounts of how young Jameen Keogh
Fought mighty battles in some foreign clime,
And think, the while the fire's burning low

And the red heart of it is turning yellow,
" 'Twas well I knew Jameen, a likely fellow!"



A FAUN IN WALL STREET

By John Myers O'Hara

WHAT shape so furtive steals along the dim
Bleak street, barren of throngs, this day of June;
This day of rest when all the roses swoon
In Attic vales where dryads wait for him?
What sylvan this, and what the stranger whim
That lured him here this golden afternoon;
Ways where the dusk has fallen oversoon
In the deep canyon, torrentless and grim.
Great Pan is far, O mad estray, and these
Bare walls that leap to heaven and hide the skies
Are fanes men rear to other deities;
Far to the east the haunted woodland lies,
And cloudless still, from cyclad-dotted seas,
Hymettus and the hills of Hellas rise.

SOUS LA SEINE

Par H. A. Douliac

LE train stoppa, s'immobilisa dans le noir. Une panne. La foule compacte, entassée, pilée, comprimée des secondes ne manifesta pas autrement de surprise ni d'humeur. Ce sont les petits inconvénients du Métro.

Employés, commis, bureaucrates, professeurs, ouvriers en bourgerons, ouvrières en cheveux, militaires, trottings, petites gens, pauvres gens, bonnes gens, aux traits lassés par le labeur quotidien et qui se hâtent vers le foyer, la soupe, le repos, tous acceptèrent d'abord l'incident sans trop de murmures.

On serait en retard, voilà tout. Et patiemment, les uns assis, les autres debout, on attendait le sifflet libérateur.

Un train croisa, éclairant un instant le sombre tunnel.

— Veinard! dit un loustic.

Le dernier wagon disparut. Le contrôleur entr'ouvrit la portière, pencha la tête pour voir.

— Ce sera long? interrogea une jeune femme frissonnante à l'air glacé pénétrant dans cette étuve.

Elle avait un châle usé sur les épaules, un marmot chétif à la main; elle le protégeait de son mieux contre le voisinage inquiétant d'un immense dragon sous le manteau duquel il disparaissait à moitié.

Un second train passa.

— Va-t-on coucher ici?

— Et moi qui rentre à Asnières.

— Moi à la caserne.

— Ben, mon colon, t'y couperas pas.

— A quelle heure dînera-t-on?

— Et l'on est sous la Seine.

Cette remarque jeta un léger froid. Ça n'ajoutait pas grand chose au désagrément de la situation: tout de même c'était constatation déplaisante.

Dans les imaginations populaires, as-

sez portées au grossissement, passaient des visions troublantes. L'eau clapotante battant les parois, suintant à travers les fissures, les noyés reposant sur un lit de vase . . .

— J'voudrais bien m'trotter! soupira une petite modiste encombrée d'un immense carton passablement aplati!

— Faudrait un scaphandre!

— Comme dans les "Travailleurs de la Mer," dit un lecteur de Victor Hugo.

— J'ai peur! avoua une grosse com-
mère.

On commençait à s'agiter, s'énervier; on froissait les journaux; on interpellait le contrôleur, qui haussait les épaules, d'un air dubitatif.

— On étouffe ici, grôgna le dragon en étirant son grand corps.

Le marmot, qui suffoquait, se mit à pleurer.

Brusquement, la lumière s'éteignit. Alors ce fut un désordre, un tumulte! On se levait, se bousculait, s'écrasait, s'injuriait, cris des uns, lazzi des autres, clameurs de femmes, hurlements d'enfants.

— Totor! Totor! Où es-tu? appelait la mère affolée qui ne sentait plus la petite main.

— Poussez pas! protestait le dragon.

La lumière reparut. Il y eut un: "Ah!" de soulagement. Mais la mère clamait toujours:

Totor! Totor!

Il n'est pas perdu ici, grogna un grincheux.

— C'est pas la forêt du Petit Poucet.

— Tenez, le v'là vot' gosse, à l'aut'-bout.

Non sans peine la pauvre femme se frayait un passage. Soudain, elle s'arrêta toute pâle.

Le bambin était entre les jambes d'un vieil ouvrier à la mine rébarbative, sous les sourcils en broussailles, mais qui bonhomme, le rassurait et le consolait avec de petites tapes amicales.

— Quel âge as-tu?

— Six ans.

— Et tu pleures! T'est donc pas un homme?

Le jeune Totor humilié refoula ses larmes.

— As pas peur! J'veais t'rendre à ton papa.

— J'ai pas d'papa.

— A ta maman alors. La vois-tu?

— Non.

— Sois tranquille, elle te retrouvera bien, elle. D'abord elle ne peut pas descendre ni toi non plus. T'es pas mal là sur mes genoux. Hop!

Le marmot rit, rassuré. Il est mieux que sous le lourd manteau du dragon; le vieux fait: "Au trot!" pour l'amuser et, là-bas, il aperçoit sa mère qui lui fait signe de rester.

— Tu vas à l'école?

— Pas encore; mais je sais lire tout de même; maman m'a appris.

— Lis un peu pour voir.

— "L'in-tran-si-geant." Quoi ça veut dire?

— Ça veut dire? . . . ça veut dire qu'y faut pas transiger. Quand on a dit "non," c'est "non."

La mère écoute de loin, tête basse.

"Non," c'est "non."

Elle entend toujours la parole dure, implacable qui la rayait de la famille après sa faute. Le père Victor était de ces vieux artisans rigides et probes, ayant le culte de l'honneur autant qu'un noble et tenant à l'intégrité du foyer.

Il n'avait pu pardonner à sa fille d'avoir écouté un galant et trompé sa confiance.

— J'suis un honnête homme; ta mère était une honnête femme; tu devais être une honnête fille; j'connais qu'ça.

Et malgré sa profonde tendresse paternelle, à cause de cela peut-être, il s'était montré sans pitié.

Jenny était partie pour ne plus revenir, et quand un maladroit s'informait par hasard de "sa demoiselle," si gentille, il répondait très bref:

— Elle a mal tourné. Pour moi, elle est morte.

Il le souhaitait peut-être. Pour certains êtres, il est moins cruel de "*pleurer un enfant mort que de le pleurer vivant.*"

Si Jenny n'était pas morte, ce n'était pas faute de chagrins, de misères. Séduite, abandonnée, toute l'histoire banale et triste; elle n'y eut pas survécue, mais elle n'était pas seule.

Un petit, c'est double charge, mais aussi double courage! Et bravement elle avait travaillé, lutté, souffert, sans rien demander au père de son enfant ni au sien; sans autre protecteur que le Père céleste, sans autre réconfort que l'Amour maternel. Que le bon Dieu le laisse près d'elle et qu'il la laisse près de lui, c'est son unique prière.

Mais elle a parfois une mauvaise toux qui l'inquiète. Que deviendrait-il, hélas, si elle n'était plus là? Le père, implacable pour sa fille, le serait-il moins pour son petit-fils?

Le cœur grelottant, elle le regarde jouer avec le pauvre, elle voudrait que cette minute s'éternise, que le train ne reparte plus.

Pauv' gosse, il n'est pas bien lourd, ni bien fort! Quand une femme est seule pour la gagner la pâtée . . .

Tout d'même, les choses ne s'arrangent pas bien. Y a trop d'enfants sans père et de pères sans enfant.

Dire que si tout avait mieux tourné, sa fille aurait pu épouser un honnête ouvrier, lui donner de beaux petits-fils comme celui-là . . .

Un coup de sifflet, le train repart.

— Où descend-tu, petit?

— Au Chatelet. Et vous, m'sieu?

— Moi aussi . . . Où est ta maman?

— La voilà.

Oh! La pauvre figure craintive! Le pauvre regard suppliant! Le vieux a un sursaut. Sa moustache se hérisse; le visage terrible reparaît sous les sourcils en broussailles. Il va repousser l'enfant.

Mais il ne peut détacher ses gros doigts de la menotte confiante . . . Brusquement, il dit: — Descendons!

Et, sans lâcher son petit-fils, il s'en va dans la foule, suivi par la mère éperdue, qui tremble et espère . . .

WHY OUR DRAMA IS BACKWARD

By George Jean Nathan

Mr. Nathan for over four years has conducted the dramatic department of THE SMART SET, and will continue to review monthly the important new plays for this magazine. We place no restrictions upon Mr. Nathan's opinions, but give him free rein to express himself honestly and fearlessly. In their vigorous protest against the tawdry and the incompetent in our native drama, his criticisms make a direct appeal to the discriminating theatergoer.

I AM by this time quite convinced that one of the reasons why our American drama is backward is because it is forward.

By this I mean to say that if many of our homemade plays were turned hind end foremost, and thus enacted, the process would not only convert them into much more intelligent pieces of work, but would invest them with at least a semblance of the coherence and logic which, as is pretty generally agreed, they only infrequently in their present form of presentation reveal. I am perfectly serious. Of course I appreciate that it is too much to hope that I shall be so regarded: I shall, as per established local custom in the case of anyone who endeavors to expose a new idea, be set down as a low joker. In the American mind, comparative originality of viewpoint and seriousness of intention are ever held to be incompatible of association; only the simon pure numskull or the pseudo-intellectual echo are accepted as being in earnest. Wherefore, we have Shaw proclaimed as harlequin and Charles Rann Kennedy, who merely echoes fortissimo Shaw's speech of Cæsar to Cleopatra in the fourth act of the play bearing the latter's names and entitles the echo "The Terrible Meek," as serious thinker.

One dramatist whose goods the device versa would improve to a considerable

degree is Augustus Thomas. Consider his latest play, "INDIAN SUMMER." Its narrative, in the order in which it is divulged to an audience through four acts, is—as currently presented—as follows:

ACT I.

Frank Whitney, a bachelor artist well along in years, has, to save a married friend's home and name, shouldered in silence responsibility for the latter's illegitimate son. Katherine Harvey, the daughter of this married friend (now dead these twenty years), is engaged to a young lawyer, and Whitney takes it upon himself to further their love interests. The girl, however, about half Whitney's age, has posed for the elderly artist, and has come gradually to feel her love swerve from the young lawyer to this other and, to her, more sympathetic man.

ACT II.

Whitney is confronted by the woman who bore the illegitimate son, is apprised that the latter has killed a man whom he found in his mother's bedroom the night before, is further warned that the boy is even now looking for Whitney, whom he believes to be the man who ruined his mother and who is responsible for his own shame of illegitimacy; and that the boy, if he finds the artist, will shoot him. The widow of the man who was in reality the boy's father

learns the truth of her husband's deceit. The widow's daughter, Katherine, rejects the young lawyer, her erstwhile sweetheart, and tells Whitney that she loves him and no other.

ACT III.

The young lawyer, angered at Katherine's treatment of him and her affection for Whitney, tells the girl that the latter is actually the illegitimate boy's father and dares the artist deny it. Despite Katherine's tears, however, Whitney remains silent. The illegitimate boy breaks into the studio where Whitney is and announces that he is about to kill Whitney, the betrayer of his mother. Whitney eyes him out of his purpose. Just then the police are heard coming in pursuit. The boy, in trying to escape, is shot and mortally wounded.

ACT IV.

Katherine is told that Whitney, who has assumed the burden of the parentage of the illegitimate boy, is guiltless: that it was her own father whose disgrace it was. Whitney announces that he is going to France to paint, and invites Katherine to come and visit him with her mother: in time—they will be married.

Reflect now how considerably this narrative, and the play, would be improved, how much more common sense, logic—even romance—would be imparted to it were it to be written and acted in the reverse way, from the end to the beginning, from the back to the front, thus:

ACT I.

Whitney announces that he is going to France to paint and invites Katherine to come and visit him with her mother: in time—they will be married. Katherine is told that Whitney, who has assumed the burden of the parentage of an illegitimate boy, is guiltless: that it was her own father whose disgrace it was.

ACT II.

The illegitimate boy breaks into the studio where Whitney is and announces that he is about to kill Whitney, the

betrayer of his mother. Whitney eyes him out of his purpose. Just then the police are heard coming in pursuit. The boy, in trying to escape, is shot and mortally wounded. The young lawyer (to whom Katherine had been engaged before she fell under the aged artist's spell), angered at Katherine's treatment of him and her affection for Whitney, tells the girl that the latter is actually the illegitimate boy's father and dares the artist deny it. Despite Katherine's tears, Whitney remains silent.

ACT III.

Katherine rejects the young lawyer, her erstwhile sweetheart, however, and tells Whitney that she still loves him and no other. The widow of the man who was in reality the illegitimate boy's father learns the truth of her husband's deceit, but Katherine, her daughter, does not yet positively know. Whitney is confronted by the woman who bore the illegitimate son, is apprised that the latter killed a man whom he found in his mother's bedroom the night before, is further warned that the boy is looking for Whitney, whom he believes to be the man who ruined his mother and who is responsible for his own shame of illegitimacy; and that the boy, if he finds the artist, will shoot him. Whitney now immediately realizes why the police were after the lad and tells the mother tenderly of what has happened.

ACT IV.

Katherine, who is half Whitney's age and who has posed for the elderly artist, still feels that her love for the young lawyer has swerved to this other and, to her, more sympathetic man. But Frank Whitney, who has, to save her dead father's home and name, shouldered in silence these twenty years responsibility for the latter's sin, maintains his silence, permits the girl to cherish her faith and ideals and takes it upon himself to further the love interests of her younger lawyer lover and herself. (And as the curtain falls, the young girl, eyes wet with the tears of misunderstanding, heart at the breaking over youth's disappointment and love unanswered,

would look to Whitney with a world of pleading. But—"No, my child," he would say to her, and his voice would be as voice paternal: "I am in the Indian summer of life and you are in life's warm and so wonderful springtime. You think you love me, dear little girl, but your love for me is like a child's love for some favorite uncle, for some favorite old friend of its parents who tells it strange stories of the great big world and helps it build wonderful castles out of its playing blocks. You'll come to see—in time. You'll come to see that youth is the greatest thing in all the world, a million times greater, a million times more important, than love itself, and that youth wants youth, longs for youth, *must have* youth for its companion—always. For youth, my child, with its flaming Fires of St. John, is love's fairy godmother. So dry your tears—ah, I see they're dry already!—and let me get you something good to eat. A full stomach is a sure cure for false sentiment. And here [hands her a book]—while I am ordering the meal, read this. It will interest you. As you see, it is by Ludwig R. Von Halsmer, a noted Düsseldorf arborist, and its title is 'When the Sap Slackens in Winter.'")

Granting that this reversed play is still by no means a good play, will you not concede that, whatever its resident demerits, it is yet a more valid, a more rational and dialectical play, and a lesser specimen of sentimental pishmince, than the original? Observe, for instance, the metamorphosis of Whitney from a typical Thomas hero into a comparatively intelligent person. Observe, for instance, the psychophysiological calm-headedness of the reversed ending in place of the dripping sugar of the original. Observe, for example, the fragmentary and irrelevant trickeries of life operating naturally in the reversed version in place of the mere trickeries of "fine construction" evident in the version currently exhibited. Observe—even so far as this very thing called "construction" goes—the greater conflict and complementary suspense of the second play.

In this same way, an inversion of most

of the plays recently promulgated by the native writers for the theater definitively improves those plays. Such a play as "THE FAMILY CUPBOARD" becomes even a moderately holding piece of work to discerning persons when turned end foremost, with the final curtain falling on the news that Nelson, still finding his home with its arctic-souled wife devoid of warm *camaraderie*, has entered into an alliance with still another sympathetic package. The son's shout, "You're keeping a chorus girl!" would thus take on a double thrill, a double intelligence, and the play as a whole would thus assume the in-this-case especially befitting circular method of construction—the play ending just where it begins—so aptly employed by such artificers as Brieux in "Les Hanneçons," Galsworthy in "The Pigeon," Schnitzler in "Professor Bernhardt," and "Reigen," *et al.*

But to return to "INDIAN SUMMER." Until this year, it has been the invariable custom of most of our metropolitan critics, every time Mr. Thomas has scored a new and particularly abject failure, to refer to him as the foremost American playwright. Now, curiously enough, only six years after everyone else has appraised Mr. Thomas at his true worth, these same critics have found him out. And they poke jest at his flamboyant platitudes, his specious "culture," his perfumed heroisms and empty melodrama. This, of course, is on the general principle that it usually takes the majority of our critics several years longer to determine the truth about our theater and the parties to it than anyone else. The case of Mr. Thomas provides an excellent example. His "Witching Hour," as futile an agglomeration of psychological amphigouri as even "The Return of Peter Grimm" or "The Case of Becky," was hailed as a great and profound contribution to American dramatic art. And one scene in it in particular, the scene wherein Hardmuth rushes in to shoot Brookfield, with the latter's "You can't pull that trigger; you can't even hold that gun!" was greeted with eulogistic awe and a completely floored veneration. Behold practically the same scene in "INDIAN

SUMMER"—a much more authentic scene, too—wherein Jack Boutell rushes in to shoot Whitney, with the latter eyeing the trigger into inaction, ridiculed by the same critics as bumptious, theatrical and absurd! Observe such Thomas philosophy in "As a Man Thinks" as "The world moves on man's faith in woman. Those countless lathes of industry turning out there, those railroads . . . are all testimony to this faith"—saluted by these critics as the message of a new Mohammed, a new Moses, a new Savonarola; and such precisely similar Thomas philosophy as "All the world's fine work is accomplished through the love of a good woman" in his latest play, laughed at from the belly by the same sage lads. And hearken to the spacious scoffing at his encyclopedic bulletins in "INDIAN SUMMER" on whippoorwills' eggs and the deep impression registered in the same individuals by his encyclopedic transcripts of color influences in "The Harvest Moon."

I charge the critics with having treated Mr. Thomas inconsistently and with gross unkindness. They have encouraged him to do the very thing he is doing and, now that he has done it, they flout him, sneer at him, revile him. Augustus Thomas is still the most proficient writer of graceful dialogue among American playwrights, and he knows more about the staging of a play than the most of them—also is he an adept professor of theatrical mechanics—but never once has he contributed a new idea, a note of substantial and authentic progress, a single living character, a single chord of fresh philosophy or a single electric observation on our life or of our peoples to the theater of the United States.

It is the commonly accepted superstition of our theatrical audiences that any woman who has broken the seventh commandment is—as a matter of pure course—naturally a breaker of all the others. As a result of this peculiarly heathen attitude, in all of our native-made plays save such wherein the woman's misdemeanor is given palliation on the ground that "I was nothing but a child

—I knew nothing of the world," an interesting harlot is held in less esteem than a virtuous bore. Just why this condition of affairs should obtain in the theater I am at a loss to understand, inasmuch as we all know perfectly well, of course, that outside the theater things are quite otherwise. However, I suppose the circumstance may be explained away by the fact that our average man's confused notion of a harlot is a woman who:

1. In France, sleeps in a Louis Quinze bed, falls in love with a young nobleman and eventually dies of consumption.
2. In England, marries a respectable man, brings about his social ostracism and eventually commits suicide.
3. In America, wears a red satin décolleté dress, frequently remarks "How about a little drink, boys?", is an omnivorous smoker of cigarettes, crosses her legs when she sits down, and eventually reforms.

It has remained for a woman, Anne Crawford Flexner, to correct, in so far as is possible under the circumstances, this widespread error into which the local theatrical *bourgeoisie* has fallen. And although, true enough, the lady playwright compromises by conventionally "reforming" her personage at the end of her play (it were too much to hope that everything might be accomplished at once), it yet obtrudes that in the character of Mrs. Oliver, in the play "THE MARRIAGE GAME," Miss Flexner has given the better-grade Sister Seven at least a portion of her just due.

Had Miss Flexner presented her argument in the form of serious drama instead of comedy, her play, of course, would very probably have brought about its ears the immediate gruntings of the professional Ivanhoes of the community's morals, it being the native mind to object to all truth in the drama unless the aforesaid truth be presented in the comic spirit. This accounts for the occurrence that so many of our so-called serious plays deal in themes which have no foundation in fact. What Miss Flexner has done is to take a platitude—which is to say, something new to the minds of the regular metropolitan theater patrons—garnish it with a very wholesome and genuine wit and

then, in spite of the latter, insinuate the result into the heads of the herd through the wise device of casting the central figure, the harlot, in the person of an actress so good-looking and so wholly entrancing in herself that the herd is wooed into acquiescence—not mentally of course (which would be impossible), but physically.

I have ever contended that, no matter what the moral nature of the role or playwright's designation of heroine or villainess or what not, the real heroine, the actually sympathetic and convincing female personage in an acted play is generally that actress who, be she what she may in the dramatic demands of the play, is the best-looking member of the cast. Send me a seat from which to review such a bi-moral female-roled play as "The Kreutzer Sonata" or "The New Magdalen" or, say, a production of "Othello" and cast some proficient old battleaxe for Desdemona and some infinitely less talented but young and very lovely hussy for Emilia, and I promise you a critique that would lose almost any newspaper critic his job ten minutes after it appeared in print! And after my critique has been read and set down as nonsense by aged authorities on the drama, I shall be prepared to have you select the most scholarly critics from among their number and pit them in argumentation against me in the public square; and I will guarantee you to criticize their heads off. Ah, the so deep hypocrisy over so much of what in the theater is called the art of acting!

Miss Alexandra Carlisle, with her own charm and polish and attractions, has done as much to make "THE MARRIAGE GAME" convincing as has its author. With the premise, "You can't win any game except by playing it to win; yet many women, when they marry, behave as though they'd won the game instead of just begun it" (see "A Woman's Way," *et al.*) Miss Flexner has related the manner in which a fashionable prostitute, flouted and insulted, still succeeds in pointing out to several virtuous and unsuccessful wives, out of her acquired knowledge of the genus homo, the ways in which they may hold

their husbands' waning affections. And she has accomplished her task with a fertility, intelligence, sparkle and grace that lifts her little play into the catalogue of genuine and artistic transient theatrical merit.

The critical delusions of the theater are queer things at best. Some day when I get sufficient leisure time from reading the daily stack of letters which urge against the worth of my critical opinions the fact that I derive much less financial remuneration for my work than do they whose labors a droll fate has brought me to criticize (unfortunately, my correspondents are in error in this belief, although, were they not, they might still be bewitched with the retort that, so far as their own incomes go, be they managers, playwrights, composers or whatever else, there are countless pawnbrokers, haberdashers, procurers, madames, ex-headwaiters, and bawdy house owners to baffle them with more obese bank books)—some day, I say, I am going to write a lengthy treatise illuminating in full an invoice of these hallucinations. In this treatise I shall point out, among a thousand or so other hallucinatory gems, such delusions as concern the so-called modern tendency toward the "happy ending" (held to be purely a modern commercial growth) and the frequent consequent comparisons of such endings, when they are revealed in our best serious drama, with the so-called "relentlessness of the Greek tragedies" and their "remorseless tragic ends." This is, of course, translucent piffle. The "happy ending" was as much a part of the "Eumenides," the "Œdipus Coloneus," the "Philoctetus" and of many of the tragedies of Euripides as it happens to be of many of our theatrical pieces of today. I shall also make a note that the delusion concerning Shakespeare's "wholly-original-among-all-his-works" "Taming of the Shrew" and "Comedy of Errors" may be dissipated by turning to the sources of these very plays in a comedy of the Italian Ariosto and in the *Menœchmi* of Plautus respectively. A page will be devoted to pointing out the stupidity of the insistent belief that a playwright, to be ac-

claimed an artist, must ever *show* his audience the actions of his characters instead of merely *relating* them, and among the examples in proof of the vacuity of the belief will be quoted "Hedda Gabler." And, in this manner, shall I proceed from the critical delusions obtaining in relation to the drama of ancient Greece down through the amplitudinous file to the critical delusions concerning the drama of our current day.

And, so far as the latter goes, one of the leading phantasms that I shall endeavor to disembowel will be the traditional and final decision of so many of my colleagues as to how verse, in contradistinction to prose, ought to be read. With the production by Mr. Winthrop Ames of the Housman-Barker "PRUNELLA," the usual critical to-do as to the proper manner in which to render verse got under way, the fact that there is scarcely any genuine verse in "PRUNELLA" discouraging the artillery corps not in the least. Granville Barker is, as he himself would be perfectly free in admitting, anything but a poet. And Lawrence Housman, while a writer of pleasant whimsy, needs only the work of his own brother, A. E., to attest to the truth of his own shortcomings in the temple of Sappho. Undeterred, however, Old Doctor Delusion put on his specs., cleared his throat and delivered himself of his familiar set of opinions on how verse, as opposed to prose, should be interpreted.

Dei gratiâ, let us have done with such lugubrious flapdoodle! The reading of verse is of a precisely similar order to the reading of prose—that is, it must be if it desire to be accurate, informed, artistic, musical and pleasing. What do the professors expect? Evidently an elaborate manifestation—however simple and innocent the rhythmical *délassement* in point—of vocal demiquaver, roulade, gorgheggiamento and picchiettato, of bronchial tarantellas and czardas, of laryngeal boleros and fandangos. Forbes Robertson is the actor he is because he recites the verse of "Hamlet" precisely as he recites the prose of "Cæsar and Cleopatra." He exhibits none of the

superficial, sentimental attitude toward verse—merely because it is verse—observable on the part of so many of our younger Anacharses of criticism and acting. He realizes that the music of Joseph Conrad and the music of William Shakespeare are each equally melodious, that the former does not call for a kettledrum and the latter a pansymphonikon: he realizes that both demand exactly the same treatment. The fault of our mummerns is not that they cannot read verse—and this is what so confuses the professors—but that they cannot read prose. One who is proficient in the latter art is synchronically proficient in the former. This exalted bosh about the reading of poetry—as if the reading of poetry were a particular, isolated and especial art—is symptomatic of the schoolboy mind. "PRUNELLA" is devoid of dazzling flights of ethereal fancy, of smart coruscations of wit and imagination; it is verse in the key of C; yet it is soothing in its simply cadenced romance, in its freedom from the overly vehement presentation of what was known in Avon as "robustious, periwig-pated fellows tearing passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings." In the main, Mr. Ames has made a tasteful job of his production, although his casting of flapper cuties fresh from tournaments with Robert W. Chambers and chocolate drops in the roles of the brash bawds of Pierrot's bed was assuredly an indiscretion.

Although I completely appreciate that what I am about to record is a form of very "fault finding," trivial and childish criticism, and although I admit I shall be properly ashamed of myself for going into the point, I somehow cannot resist the temptation to suggest to Mr. Belasco, who has devoted so much time to the elaborate precision and perfection of stage lighting effects, one very considerable error which he has committed in this, his especially chosen field of artistry. The second act of his latest production, Roland Molineux's "THE MAN INSIDE," is laid in the District Attorney's office at ten o'clock in the morning. At the back of the stage there

are three tall windows through which the hard white daylight streams into that portion of the room furthest from the audience. But the footlights, which obviously in the present case must be supposed to reflect the light that would stream in through the imaginary windows of the imaginary fourth wall, are amber, causing three-quarters of the room to be flooded in a light that suggests gas or electricity, but certainly not the cutting cold white morning brilliance visible through the panes at the rear of the stage. I have admitted that this is Pecksniffian observation, yet does not Mr. Belasco challenge this very thing?

So far as Mr. Molineux's melodrama commands critical attention, the current debate in the ale houses would seem to resolve itself chiefly into a perplexity as to whether the piece starts off like Gorky's "Nachtasyl" (Night Shelter), with young Gordon, assistant prosecuting attorney, in the place of the white-bearded Luka, *raisonneur* and faith healer, or like "Chinatown Charlie." What interests me in the play, however, is its amazing, albeit evidently sincere, philosophical antiquity. Its two principally exploited philosophies are "If you think right you will do right" and "Thought is the cause of all action." From these is the drama deduced and through these solved. Aside from the patent fact that both tenets are as stale as the world itself and accepted by ninety-nine persons out of every hundred, the light worms in that neither of them is entirely true.

To test the probity of the first, one must first inquire into what is meant by "right." Inasmuch as conceptions of "right" vary, and not without very sound sense, the statement must be made to read, "One will act in accordance to the way one thinks." Proceeding to the second premise of the general syllogism, we analyze and quickly learn that thought is *not* the cause of all action. Here is no place for an elaboration of this argument, so may I refer such as are interested in the proof to Wundt's "Grundzüge," II, XX, XXI; James's "Principles," II, XXIV, XXVI; Külpe's "Outlines of Psychology," para-

graphs 53 and 67; H. Münsterberg's "Die Willenshandlung" and G. H. Schneider's "Menschliche Wille" and "Thierische Wille." Discovering therefore that thought is not the cause of all action, and that, as a consequence, even were one to think "right" (granting any meaning to "right" that is here requested of us) one would not necessarily always act upon the impulse of such virtuous thought, we see at a glance the generic imperfection of the dramatic argument.

It is all very well to hope for the rehabilitation of criminals, but alas for Mr. Molineux's belief that this instauration may be accomplished with a soft voice and a study of psychology. Nix! The only way in which criminals may be "reformed" is to reform not the criminal but the system which in the first place has made him a criminal. Besides, who are you or who am I that it is given us to say that a man is a criminal because he believes and acts otherwise than you and I believe and act? The play under discussion contains some little humor, some sharp character drawing and a ton of "local color," but both in its leading dramatic devices and thematic atmosphere is it shopworn and debilitated.

About every year or so some otherwise noble fellow conceives the idea that there is a "great big moving human drama" in the theme of the spiritual-minded young clergyman who views the outside world as a vast and lustful charnel house, who, falling under the charms of a worldly opera singer or actress, is led by her out into "life" and who, after mental alarms and physical excursions, is brought to one of five startling conclusions, to wit:

1. That "the good in human beings overshadows the bad, after all."
2. That "the spirit is weaker than the flesh."
3. That "conscience and vows are as nothing in the face of an overpowering love."
4. That "go where you will, be what you will, do what you will, but Glory come back to me."
5. That "you have opened my eyes and made me understand, dear woman; I shall hear you singing in my heart forever."

The latest recruit in the business is Mr. Edward Childs Carpenter; his play

"THE TONGUES OF MEN." A standard touring car, 1885 model.

With its so gorgeous idea, originally and simultaneously suggested to Canon Hannay (George Birmingham) and to Lady Gregory by that witty Celt, George W. Russell, and first done into a play by the Lady under the title of "The Image," the freshest and most thoroughly captivating of recent satirical contributions to the drama, "GENERAL JOHN REGAN," has at last arrived in the local port. My description of this admirable piece of work from a sitting upon it in London was sufficiently extended to permit me to dismiss it here with what would otherwise be an indecently meager quota of space. Suffice it to say that Mr. Tyler's American presentation of the play, with Arnold Daly surpassing Charles Hawtrey in the delineation of the sidereal role, is, if anything, even more satisfactory than the original across the seas.

Melodrama may be defined as the type of drama in which unsound platitudes triumph over sound logic. To a copious extent, therefore, Miss Rachel Crothers's new play, "OURSELVES," produced at the Lyric, is melodrama. Selecting as her theme that sweetheart of the popular magazines, a like sex standard for men and women, Miss Crothers exercises her characters with the familiar pyrotechnic disputations until they one and all loudly agree, at eleven o'clock, that the popular magazines are right, that girls will surely go on being "ruined" just so long as villainous men are permitted by women to roam about looking for fresh victims, and that it is no more necessary, despite everything claimed for the defense, for a man to gratify his passions than for a woman. Miss Crothers is an adroit scrivener but, unlike Miss Marian Fairfax and Miss Margaret Mayo, who alone among our native women playwrights would seem to be able to treat a woman character from a man's as well as from a woman's standpoint, she permits herself ultimately to be enslaved by her primitive feminine emotions. Her suave attempt to conceal this fact with a line placed here and there pretending to an

exposition of the other side of the question tricks no one. She is, in the final parsing, an ardent apostle of what Mr. Bronson-Howard has written down as the "sucker viewpoint."

Take, for instance, her treatment of the theme in the present instance. As such deacons among eighteenth century moralists as Clark and Cudworth have observed, moral philosophy is an inquiry of the same certainty and *à priori* nature as mathematics and so must be investigated. In the study of sex, "sex standards" and the "morality" appertaining thereunto, hard heads rather than soft hearts are essential. But what has Miss Crothers done? She has dismissed the grim facts of nature and of moral economics and in their stead has woven a fabric out of sobs, tears and the kindred elements of theatricalized sentimentality. What her theme demands—and what she has failed to bring to it—is an appreciation out of experience of the fundamental principles of physiology and instinctive action, of such simple philosophy as is given us by David Hume in section XII of the second part of his "Treatise of Human Nature." It requires chill deductions from Darwin, from Huxley's "Man's Place in Nature," from Ellis, Weininger and their thousands of analytical brother physicians. Miss Crothers argues that man has fought against everything in nature and conquered everything—at least to a degree—with the single exception of sex. Rumble-bumble! Miss Crothers has been misled by the airships and anesthetics, by wireless telegraphy and the harnessing of Niagara. She has been reading Mr. Hearst's Sunday supplements. The fundamental laws of nature from gravity to a monarchical form of government, from sex to selfishness, have not been and cannot be successfully dented. The conquering of sex is a business for weak men—or post-graduate Don Juans.

Last month I quoted from memory the following bit from the play "Today": "Gee, you say that guy's not old! Why, Bo, he pulled stroke when Washington crossed the Delaware." I am indignantly assured by one of the authors that the words, "Gee," "Bo" and "guy" were not in the dialogue.

A PESTILENCE OF NOVELS

By H. L. Mencken

NOVELS in all directions! Novels by the hundredweight, the barrel, the acre and the archipelago! Novels hip-deep in my studio, and overflowing into my boudoir, my eating room and my oratory, and even into my bathroom! Stepping out of my shower this morning, my eyes full of water, I slipped upon one Indiana masterpiece and came down heavily—being now very buxom, nay, matronly, in figure—upon another. And all day the express wagons and autotrucks drove up with their romantic burdens, until my butler and my bouncer were full of weariness and charley horse, and I had to recruit a couple of neighboring blackamoors to help them haul in the packages. Novels, novels, novels! Novels bound in sober blues, in bucolic greens, in leering purples, in strident scarlets! Novels about stolen jewels, lost wills, flirtatious widows, daring young stockbrokers, conspiring ambassadors, struggling artists, cavian polygamists, pursuits by airship, secret passions, innocent adulteries, wholesale deviltries! Novels that suggest paprika, peaches à la Melba, garlic, macaroons, wild duck, honest *pot-au-feu*! Novels dripping *eau de cologne*, bichloride, buttermilk, mayonnaise, goose grease! Novels giving out vague hints of toilet waters, sachet powders, funeral wreaths—

(Why, indeed, has no publisher ever thought of perfuming his novels? The final refinement of publishing! Barabbas turned Petronius! For instance, consider the pastoral romances of Gene Stratton-Porter. They have a subtle flavor of newmown hay already; why not add the actual essence, and so help imagination spread its wings? For the

autobiographical pages of Jack London, the pungent, hospitable smell of a first-class saloon—that ineffable mingling of Maryland rye, cigar smoke, stale malt liquor, radishes, potato salad and—*blutwurst*. For the Dartmoor sagas of Eden Phillpotts, the warm, ammoniacal bouquet of cows, poultry and yokels. For Hall Caine, musk and frankincense. For the “Dodo” school, violets and Russian cigarettes. For Mrs. Glyn and her friends, the fragrant blood of the red, red rose. For the venerable Howells, lavender and mignonette. For Zola, Rochefort and wet leather. For Mrs. Humphry Ward, lilies of the valley. For Marie Corelli, tuberose and brimstone. For Richard Harding Davis, carnations. For Upton Sinclair—but here I leave you to make your own choice. All I offer is the general idea. It has been tried in the theater. Well do I remember the first weeks of “Florodora” at the Casino, with a manikin in the lobby squirting “La Flor de Florodora” upon all us Florodorans: I was put on trial for my life when I got home. Why not try it on books? Why not caress the nose as well as the eye?)

But as I was saying, novels, novels, novels! Novels rearing themselves in great pyramids, bastions, mounds, obelisks! Novels innumerable, illimitable! And yet, I regret to report, not a single first-rate novel among them. The best of them is no more than an honest union job, a safe and sound piece of writing, a triumph of technique over lack of inspiration. Which best of them, unless I err, is “THORLEY WEIR,” by E. F. Benson (*Lippincott*). Benson is the man who wrote the original “Dodo,” but when the lady novelists of England began turn-

ing out a "Dodo" a week he abandoned the field of epigrammatic intrigue for that of the comedy of manners, and since then he has produced a number of highly diverting things, especially "Mrs. Ames." I told you about "Mrs. Ames" a year or so ago, in terms, as I recall them, of eloquent praise. I lament that I cannot heap the same encomiums upon "THORLEY WEIR." It is workmanlike, it is shipshape, it is the product of a novelist who understands novel writing as thoroughly as Johann Sebastian Bach understood polyphony, but it lacks the final touch, the flavor of sincerity. Here and there the characters are pulled about in a cavalier and too-businesslike manner; in the very middle the chief of them is transformed boldly from a genial old rascal into a beetle-browed villain.

This fellow bears the name of Arthur Craddock, and fifty years of celibacy have left him with hardening arteries and a great loneliness in his heart. His profession is the discovery of unappreciated geniuses, an enterprise in which he is helped by a thorough knowledge of art in all its branches and a keen sense of what the public wants. Once he finds such a genius, he relieves the poor devil's inevitable poverty, slaps him encouragingly on the back, and takes an option on his work for three years. Then, being a critic as well as a connoisseur, he proceeds to cry up his find in the newspapers and magazines. And then, being an art dealer and a play broker as well as a critic, he proceeds to cash in. The business would seem to be as certain in its profits as that of the Standard Oil Company. But, alas for poor Craddock, it has pitfalls to rival those of a Mexican mining company, and into one of these he pitches headlong on page 252, and when the chronicle closes with page 346, he is still immersed to his neck, and, what is sadder still, his best girl, Miss Joyce Wroughton, is yielding her coral lips to Mr. Charles Lathom, the rising young portrait painter.

Lathom is one of Craddock's discoveries, and he is docile and grateful until Frank Armstrong, another one, whispers

rebellion into his ear. Then he runs amuck in true novel hero fashion, and when the smoke clears away he has repudiated his bargain, stolen Joyce from under Craddock's nose, and informed the valetudinarian Mr. Wroughton, Joyce's papa, that the Reynolds he sold to Mr. Ward, the rich American, for five thousand pounds, really brought ten thousand, the balance having stuck to Craddock's hands. In order to make us approve all this blackjacking of an accomplished merchant, Mr. Benson has to turn him into a soulless Shylock, and the transformation, as I have said, is achieved ineptly, and so somewhat irritatingly. One sympathizes with Craddock when Lathom and Armstrong fall upon him: it seems a shame that his actual benefits should be so quickly forgotten. But aside from this large lump in the middle of the spine, "THORLEY WEIR" is a very graceful, charming confection. You will enjoy Craddock until he sprouts his horns, and you will enjoy even more the amazing cavortings of old Lady Crowborough, Joyce's grandmother, who is still a flirt at eighty-eight and full of excellent advice to young ladies in love. Armstrong, too, is an entertaining fellow, with his saturnine humor and his bulldog pugnacity, and so, for that matter, is Lathom, for all his change of front. The book, I dare say, will not live beyond its brief day, but I found it more amusing than any other in the current crop.

Far below it are such things as "HIS GREAT ADVENTURE," by Robert Herrick (*Macmillan*), "FOOTPRINTS BENEATH THE SNOW," by Henry Bordeaux (*Duffield*), and "THE WONDROUS WIFE," by Charles Marriott (*Bobbs-Merrill*), all of them by authors of a certain repute, and all of them dull beyond expression. In the first named, Mr. Herrick tries to write a tale of adventure—all about a starving young dramatist who befriends a dying millionaire, and is deluged with money for his pains, and then proceeds to spend it as a theatrical angel. The author of "Together" would do well to return to his proper business: we have enough MacGraths and McCutcheons as it is. "FOOTPRINTS BENEATH THE

SNOW" is another maudlin story by the French platitudinarian whose "The Fear of Living" was published with a great flourish of trumpets a year or so ago. It tells us how Mme. Thérèse Romenay, wife of a Paris architect, runs away from her husband with one André Norans, and how Norans is killed in an Alpine avalanche and Thérèse badly hurt, and how Romenay finally forgives her and takes her back. The thing is full of mush: it belongs to that French reaction toward the copybook moralities of which Eugène Brieux is the patron saint. "THE WONDROUS WIFE" is cut from the same cloth. It tells how Margaret Lisle, separated from her unfaithful husband and in love with a dashing young engineer, goes back to the former when he falls ill. I venture the guess that it belongs to Mr. Marriott's apprentice days. He has done creditable work in "The Catfish." But here he merely fills page after page with commonplace.

"CIRCE'S DAUGHTER," by Priscilla Craven (*Duffield*), is in the height of the fashion: it deals with the effects of heredity and might do service as a eugenical—or anti-eugenical—tract. Is it possible for the daughter of such a woman as Sybil Iverson to be virtuous—Sybil *alias* Circe, the heroine of a hundred scandals, the Lorelei, the man hunter, even the enchantress of kings? Miss Craven attempts a copious answer, but ends by begging the question. One of Sybil's two daughters goes her own route, though with prudent reservations. The other turns out a man hater, an iceberg, a vestal—in her own phrase, a "throwback" to remote ancestors, perhaps even to the primordial asexual cell. She is almost, if not quite, sexless. It gives her no more joy to kiss a man than to kiss a china dog. In the end she goes off to Canada to try apple ranching, leaving not even the whisper of a whisper behind her. As for the other and more natural daughter, Claudia by name, she marries Gilbert Currey, K.C., and after a series of desperate flirtations, none of them leading to her actual downfall, she is left an interesting widow, and presently weds Colin Paton, whom she

loves with monogamous ardor. There is also a son of the house, Lieutenant Jack Iverson, of the Blues. He crowns a long apprenticeship at stage doors by marrying the Girle Girl, a star of the music halls; but one night a curtain falls upon her and converts her into a pious invalid, and Jack is so affected thereby that he, too, takes to virtue. A somewhat puzzling story. Its moral seems to be that even eugenics occasionally slips a cog.

The merit of "VAN CLEVE," by Mary S. Watts (*Macmillan*), lies in its unflinching good spirits, its air of gusto. The saving grace of human existence, as Mrs. Watts sees it, is its absurdity, and I suppose she is right. The one great defect that all the world religions have in common is that they allow the Creator no humor. He is always depicted as one to whom the fall of a sparrow is a serious matter, and the fall of a Sunday school superintendent (a far more frequent accident) a cause of acute grief. Nothing, of course, could be more unlikely. It is vastly easier to believe that the fall of a Sunday school superintendent causes mirth instead of grief in Heaven, as it undoubtedly does on earth and in Hell, and that it is sometimes arranged for the deliberate purpose of producing that mirth, just as the fall of a servant girl is cunningly arranged by the small boy who anoints the kitchen stairs with soap. Thus viewed, the everyday transactions of life, and even the majority of its catastrophes, lose most of their seriousness, and hence most of their painfulness. If the rheumatism which now bubbles in my knees is, after all, nothing worse than a joke, then I am quite willing to join in the laugh. It may be somewhat difficult, at the start, to do so, but practice makes perfect. Most of us have got so far that we can laugh at our stiff knees and barked shins of last month. The Puritan, true enough, can't do it, for he sees in all such manifestations the rage of a savage and unrelenting enemy, but we heathen *can* do it. And it is but a step to laughing at the ills of last week, yesterday and today. Few of them last—a joke quickly

wears thin—and few of them leave permanent damage behind them.

In all this, to be sure, I may be crediting Mrs. Watts with heresies undreamt of by her theology. She may be, for all I know, a Methodist in good standing, and as such view appendicitis as a punishment for sleeping late on the Sabbath. But if that is her interpretation of the eternal mysteries, then why does she treat the hopes and heartburnings of Mr. Van Cleve Kendrick so lightly? And why does she carry her good humor into the description of even drearier matters—for instance, the death of young Philip Cortwright on the bloody field of San Juan, and the lamentable seduction of Miss Paula Jameson, and the trial and condemnation of young Bob Gilbert therefor? All of these events are treated cynically, even with a touch of malice. As for me, I find the merit of the story in that very fact. It gets away from the stupid seriousness, the solemn donkeyishness of our current novels; it borrows something of the lordly air of Meredith and Henry James; it depicts a group of typical Americans, not as heaven-kissing heroes and heroines, but as rather pathetic comedians, which is what they really are. This Van Cleve Kendrick is a fellow you all know: a pushing, unimaginative, laborious, "right thinking" citizen, good to his womenkind, honest enough to escape jail, an advocate of safety and sanity. He has a heart, too: he loves Lorrie Gilbert, and he waits for her doggishly until the youth of both of them is spent. I think that Mrs. Watts comes close here to the tragedy of every day—I mean in the scene wherein Van and Lorrie fall into each other's arms at last, he with his hair grown thin, she with her streak or two of gray. When I say tragedy, of course, I don't mean the tragedy that makes the eyes pop, but the tragedy that stirs up a pitying, good-humored smile. Put Van Cleve beside the common novel hero, by Dress Suit out of Steam Yacht—and what a difference, m'luds; what a difference! . . . In short, a novel worth reading, if not actually a novel worth cherishing. Its author has her sails spread and a

fair wind behind her. She will go farther than most.

An interlude of trade goods—tales of mystery, ballads of cruel wills, searches for lost jewels, the feats of superhuman detectives. In "LOVE IN A HURRY," by Gelett Burgess (*Bobbs-Merrill*), we have a hero who must marry in so-and-so-many hours, minutes, seconds—ah, the old stock company, the "sure fire" stuff! His name is Hall Bonistelle, he is a fashionable photographer by profession, and the amount at stake is four million dollars. Various charmers try to shanghai him, but at the last one finds him safely sutured to Miss Flodie Fisher, the queen of his reception room. In "THE EYE OF DREAD," by Payne Erskine (*Little-Brown*), we have a hero accused of his own murder; in "THE THOUSANDTH WOMAN," by E. W. Hornung (*Bobbs-Merrill*), we have one who gets into the net of a new-fangled deductive detective, and has a deuce of a time getting out; and in "ALIAS THE NIGHT WIND," by Varick Vanardy (*Dillingham*), we have one who is charged with robbing a bank, and who revenges himself upon the gendarmes by leading them a headlong chase, and by treating them to sound threshings whenever they come close to him. Three fugitives from justice—and all of them innocent. What a world! Their names, in order, are Peter Cragmile, Jr., Sweep Cazalet and Bingham Harvard. The ladies who love and trust them are Amalia, Blanche and Kate. What a world! They all go free in the end. . . . What a world!

In "THE INNER MAN," a translation from the French by Florence Crewe-Jones (*Dillingham*), the proceedings are even more astounding. The very first chapter introduces us to a miracle: Gabriel Mirande, kneeling by the grave of his loved one, Mme. Simone Castellan (she has married the other fellow), hears her cry: "I am stifling—stifling! Where am I? Air! Air! What is this—on my face?" Gabriel jumps up, rushes off for the gravediggers and has Simone exhumed. She is actually alive! And what is the explanation? The explanation is that Gabriel is full of a serum dis-

covered by his master, M. le Professeur Biron, which serum confers the gift of second sight. "He who is injected with it," says Prof. Biron, "can read the thoughts of others—as if he heard their voice—it lasts some hours. He becomes the receiver—as in wireless telegraphy. Keep the secret—keep it at any cost. If not, they will think you are a madman. A secret—my last wish." Whereupon the *professeur* breathes his last, leaving Gabriel that unearthly monopoly. No need to tell you that he uses it well. Set beside him, all other detectives, including even Sherlock Holmes, take on the aspect of imbecile children. He is far above analyzing cigar ashes, measuring hats, examining thumbprints, developing retinal images. All he has to do is to take a dose of his serum, and at once he is prepared to pump out the minds of all the criminals in France. I match this Gabriel Mirande against any sleuth invented by our own fictioneers. It will be many a day, I venture to opine, before ever he is knocked out in fair combat.

The art of novel writing, indeed, is being pushed to its limits. All the standard plots are now brought up to an almost unimaginable degree of refinement. For example, the old plot of the American heiress and the foreign count. A few years ago it was sufficient for the heiress to marry the count and live unhappily ever after. But in "THE UNAFRAID," by Eleanor M. Ingram (*Lippincott*), there is a super-count, and he begins business by stealing the heiress from the count, who is his younger brother. The name of the poor girl is Delight Warren, and she goes to Montenegro to marry Count Michael Balsic, or Lieutenant Balsic, or Gospodin Balsic, as you please. But she is met at the wharf by Count Stefan of the same house, and two days later he marries her himself. Not that Stefan is a scoundrel. Far from it, indeed! As the able illustrator, Professor Edmund Frederick, has drawn him, he is a handsome young man in the costume worn by Donald Brian in "The Merry Widow"—a handsome young man, seven feet five inches in height, standing on the topmost crag

of one of his native mountains, against a salmon pink and lemon yellow sky. What is more, Delight learns to love him, and on page 368 it is announced that a young count is expected, and that his name will be Danilo. She never mourns Count Michael. This gentleman, in truth, turns out to be a bad lot, and on page 360 he is shot by Stefan.

With "THE CONFESSIONS OF A DÉBUTANTE," by some anonymous confectioner (*Houghton-Mifflin*), I will not trouble you: as Eddie Foy says, 'tis a pretty thing. It comes in oiled paper and a cardboard box, apparently for presentation at Christmas to helpless relatives. The débutante bears the name of Peggy and is beloved by two elegant gentlemen, Mr. Gerald Winthrop and the Count de Rochfort (To the Printer: Don't make it Roquefort!). Peggy accepts Gerald and the Count sheds a respectful tear. The same sort of oiled paper protects "LADY LAUGHTER," by Ralph Henry Barbour (*Lippincott*). Here the binding is lavender in color, and there is a picture label showing a very pretty girl with vermilion hair. Mr. Barbour, it appears, has written no less than ten such books, "each . . . elaborately illustrated in color, with page decorations in tint throughout, and handsomely bound, with medallion inset in colors on the cover . . . and enclosed in a decorated box." We are still among the violets and gumdrops in "A ROSE OF OLD QUEBEC," by Anne Hollingsworth Wharton (*Lippincott*), the chronicle of a sad, sweet attachment between young Captain Nelson, of the *Albemarle*, and Miss Mary Thompson, daughter to the bluff old Scotch-Canadian, Mr. Sandy Thompson. The young captain is for wedding Mary forthwith, despite old Sandy's opposition, but a letter miscarries and he is left waiting at the church, and so he sails in the *Albemarle*, a bachelor still. Years later, after each has found another mate, they meet again in London. The Captain is now a belted earl and the idol of his country, but he keeps a soft spot in his heart for little Mary.

"HIS FATHER'S WIFE," by J. E. Pat-

terson (*Macmillan*), introduces us to the stodgy peasants of East Anglia, a race apparently as dull and disagreeable as Mr. Phillpotts's hinds of Dartmoor. Aaron Rugwood, a middle-aged widower, marries his pretty ward, young Barbara. His sailor son, Roger, is already in love with her, and before long she is in love with Roger. When the inevitable crash comes, Aaron commits suicide, and Roger and Barbara disappear together. Mr. Patterson is as elephantine in manner as the people he describes: I have found his book very heavy reading. Livelier stuff, but still uninspired, is to be found in "VALENTINE," by Grant Richards (*Houghton-Mifflin*), which has a dashing, airshipping hero with that substratum of honest worth one always finds in novel heroes; and in "THE END OF HER HONEYMOON," by Mrs. Belloc Lowndes (*Scribner*), a tale of mystery redeemed by a truly surprising dénouement; and in "THE TERRIBLE TWINS," by Edgar Jepson (*Bobbs-Merrill*), in which two highly improbable English children entertain with jejune deviltries; and in "THE ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN O'SHEA," by Ralph D. Paine (*Scribner*), a series of four picturesque novelettes, each with a new Captain Kettle as its central figure; and in "RING FOR NANCY," by Ford Madox Hueffer (*Bobbs-Merrill*), and "AND THEN CAME JEAN," by Robert Alexander Wason (*Small-Maynard*), farcical pieces which tickle the midriff pleasantly.

Novels, novels, novels! Did I say that all were stale, unprofitable and lacking in distinction? Then I forgot "YOUTH'S ENCOUNTER," by Compton Mackenzie (*Appleton*), the history of a boy from his third year to his eighteenth. There is good stuff here: illuminating glimpses of a boy's mind at work, grappling with the great problems of adolescence, reacting against the collective boy mind of school and playground, patiently testing and estimating an endless succession of new ideas. Michael Fane is no barbarian Huckleberry Finn, innocently roving the wild, but a youngster in the midst of a highly complex and sophisticated society. He lives in a good London neighborhood, he has a

governess, he goes to a public school, he is not unaware of social distinctions; when we leave him he is about to enter Oxford. But for all that he remains the Eternal Boy, and a savage under his Eton color and stovepipe hat. One has only to read Chapter IV to recognize his reality—that chapter describing his labors and diversions at twelve or thereabout: his elaborate schemes for deceiving his schoolmasters, his practical jokes upon cooks and gardeners, his nocturnal expeditions up dark alleys and along backyard fences, his infinite pains at football, his general destructiveness and happy lack of conscience, his scorn for the female of the species. Later on Michael proceeds to higher things. He oscillates between piety and skepticism, he gropes vaguely toward a lifework, he becomes aware of woman. He discovers the supreme loveliness of the world—and walks full tilt into its nastiness. He survives a gigantic collapse of ideals. He begins to evolve a point of view, a saving wariness, a working philosophy. Every step is perfectly accounted for and brilliantly described. The boy has adventures that are far from typical, and naturally enough, they color him and condition him; but at bottom, as I have said, he is the boy that all of us have been. A novel worth looking into. Within its limits, an excellent piece of writing.

Complementary to "Youth's Encounter" is "WHEN I WAS A LITTLE GIRL," by Zona Gale (*Macmillan*), a somewhat curious mixture of recollection and fantasy, shot through with the strange, pale colors that Miss Gale always uses so effectively. Never having been a little girl myself, I cannot bear witness to parts of this chronicle, but the New Boy, at all events, is as genuinely boyish as Michael Fane, and the breath of life is in Grandmother Beers. Few of the other favorite lady fictioneers do as well as Miss Gale this autumn. For example, in "THE CUSTOM OF THE COUNTRY," by Edith Wharton (*Scribner*), I can find nothing save a somewhat obvious study of a social climber—a well-mannered and amusing story, to be sure, but not one that con-

tributes anything of novelty or importance to the type, and surely not one that increases the stature of the author of "Ethan Frome." Poor Ethan, indeed, is dogging Mrs. Wharton: she must labor prodigiously to surpass him, or even to equal him. Nor do I note anything to arrest the literary historian in "THE STORY OF WAITSTILL BAXTER," by Kate Douglas Wiggin (*Houghton-Mifflin*), a tale of New England village life two or three generations ago, in a manner oscillating ineptly between irony and sentimentality. Mrs. Wiggin, I suppose, has worked in sugar paste far too long to have a hand for hewing flint. Her Deacon Foxwell Baxter often eludes her. He is one of those harsh, forthright, steel-jointed New Englanders who cry aloud for a Zola or a Dostoevsky, and some day, let us hope, a novelist of that larger talent will arise to do him justice. We had a view of his background in the "Ethan Frome" aforesaid, but our national gallery still lacks the man himself.

I dip into a dozen other novels without encountering anything worth reporting at length. Taking one with another, the English importations show vastly better workmanship than the things made at home, but the significance of that fact may be easily overestimated. All it shows, I venture, is that our American publishers read the English reviews, and are guided by the critics they profess to despise. In dealing with American work they must depend upon their own unaided judgment, and that judgment, if the books they print really represent it, is unsound four times out of five. In the case of their importations, which are printed and reviewed in England before they bring them in, they err only three times out of five. Thus it is almost an even bet that a new novel of English origin will be reasonably entertaining, or, at all events, that it will be written in reasonably intelligible English. This is true of "SUCCESSION," by Ethel Sidgwick (*Small-Maynard*), but when so much has been said, nearly all has been said. In a word, I can discern no sign of genius in this Miss Sidgwick. She is

an accomplished journeyman fictioneer, with a sharp eye for oddity in character and considerable skill at creating and maintaining atmosphere, but she overwrites everything unmercifully, and at the end of it all—where are we? As for me, I am fast asleep—and dreaming of Falk on his crazy tugboat, of Hurstwood in his Bowery lodging house, of McTeague and his gigantic golden tooth, of Evelyn Innes, the Marchioness of Chesterford, Pantagruel, Tom Jones, Huckleberry Finn . . .

But, as I have said, you will find competent writing in these English novels, and a disposition to imitate worthy models, and so they are always less tedious than the generality of their American rivals. I dredge up a few examples from the stream flowing past: "YOUTH WILL BE SERVED," by Dolf Wyllarde (*Lane*); "DIVIDED," by Francis Bancroft (*Small-Maynard*); "MEMOIRS OF MIMOSA," by Anne Elliot (*Moffat-Yard*); and "RICHARD FURLONG," by E. Temple Thurston (*Appleton*), the first a sort of protest against the sacrifices that maternity demands of women, the second a well managed story of the Boer War, the third a study of a coquette, and the fourth a picture of the lower levels of artistic Bohemia in London. Uninspired, all! In not one of them do you feel that "obscure, inner necessity" of which Joseph Conrad tells. But though they are thus trade goods pure and simple, they are yet trade goods of a very superior quality. You will get as much gentle stimulation (or had I better say caressing?) out of the story of Gillian Joyce's torturous upbringing of her son Clarence, or out of young Dicky Furlong's adventures in art and amour, or out of the sexual duelling of Mimosa Leighton-Folingsby—just as much, let us say, as out of hearing a symphony by Anton Bruckner. That is to say, you will be diverted without being excited, fed without being filled. "Heart of Darkness," a single short story, is worth all the novels of this sort printed since January 1, 1875. But half a dozen of them are worth all the American best-sellers since "Ben Hur."

Which brings us, by devious paths, to "DOWN AMONG MEN," by Will Levington Comfort (*Doren*), a novelist with a great gift for vivid and brilliant narration, and an even greater gift for jejune and garrulous philosophizing. The same disconcerting combination of qualities is to be found in Jack London, but he commonly lets the former obscure the latter. In the compositions of Mr. Comfort the process is reversed. That is to say, he seems to suffer from an overpowering impulse to bury his story—usually a very good one—beneath enormous dunes and culm piles of parts of speech. This vast emission of words, let it be said, is not always tedious. They are pretty words, they are cleverly arranged, they are given dignity by a copious use of capitals. Their first effect is a sort of enchantment: one wallows in them esthetically, emotionally, sensually, as one wallows in the obscene polyphony of Richard Strauss. But when reflection begins to drive out mere cerebral sensation, irritation follows upon enjoyment. In brief, it becomes slowly apparent that the meaning of all these burbling adjectives and arresting metaphors is often impenetrably obscure, and that when they are actually intelligible, their content is usually nothing more than an intellectual milk toast, a mixture of the obvious and the merely ornamental.

The canned reviews speak eloquently of Mr. Comfort's idealism, but all I can find in it is a furious restatement of the Christian view of women. We all know the twofold root (to borrow from Schopenhauer) of that view. On the one hand it exalts woman as the beyond-man, the trans-mammal, the near-angel, the missionary from Heaven; and on the other hand it brands her as the eternal temptress, the Lorelei, the high priestess of the Devil. The Madonna and Mother Eve, the celestial virgins and the hellish succubi—how curious that these discordant ladies should ap-

pear equally authentic and typical to the Early Fathers! And yet, as Havellock Ellis has pointed out, they survive in our dominant mythology to this day.

Woman is purity, inspiration, virtue—but man had better avoid her if he would be saved! Mr. Comfort adopts this doctrine bodily, merely substituting "save others" for "be saved." The hero of "DOWN AMONG MEN," like the hero of his "Fate Knocks at the Door," is a gyneolator who fears his goddess. She has led him up to grace, she has shown him the Upward Path, the Way to Consecration (I essay to capitalize in the Comfortian manner)—but the moment she lets go his hand, he takes to his heels. What is worse, he sends a friend to her, to explain in detail how unfavorably any further communion with her would affect his high and holy mission—*i. e.*, to save the downtrodden by writing plays that fail and books that no publisher will accept.

With the best intentions in the world, I confess a complete inability to see anything more than empty words in all Mr. Comfort's rhetorical hymning of Mystic Motherhood, Third Lustrous Dimensions and other such fantastic phantasms of the New Thought. I see nothing divine in women, and nothing diabolical. Men can get along without them—and in spite of them. The greatest of human achievements have been performed without their aid, and likewise the foulest of human swineries. Even as temptations, they are now of the second magnitude. Man has invented stronger appetites than the primal one for woman's kisses. I mention only two: that for ethyl alcohol and that for fame. Gyneophobia is an archaic madness, and so is gyneolatry. . . . I get no stimulation out of this fantastic tale, with its leprous hero and its sonorous mysticism. Even the battle scenes, stirring in themselves, are overladen with platitudes and piffle.





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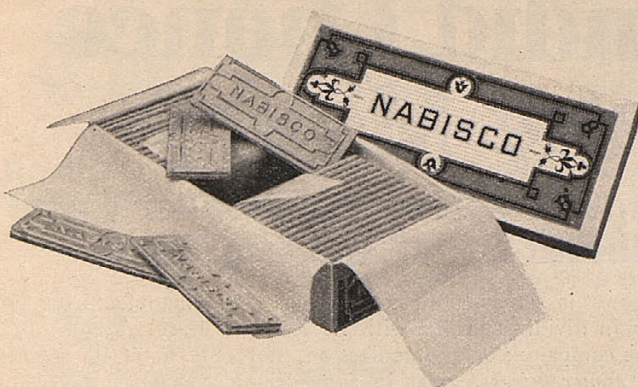


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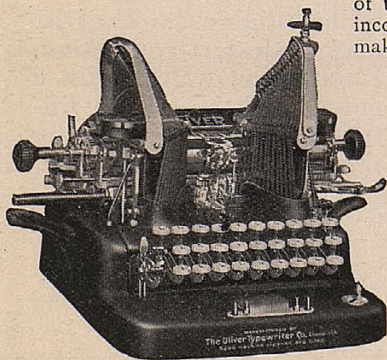
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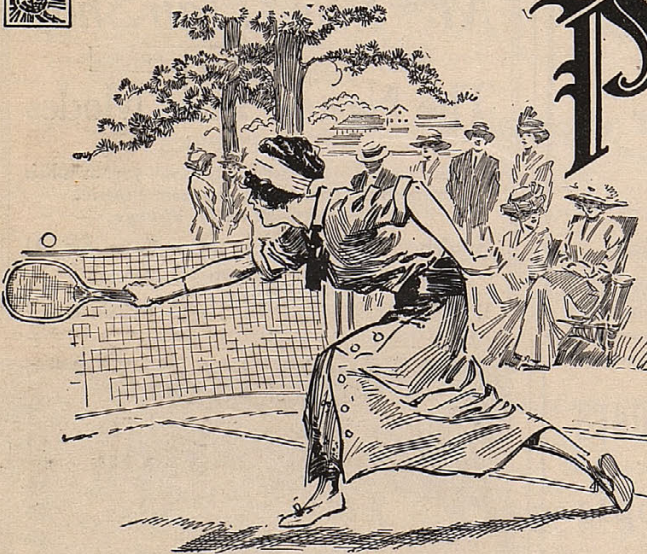
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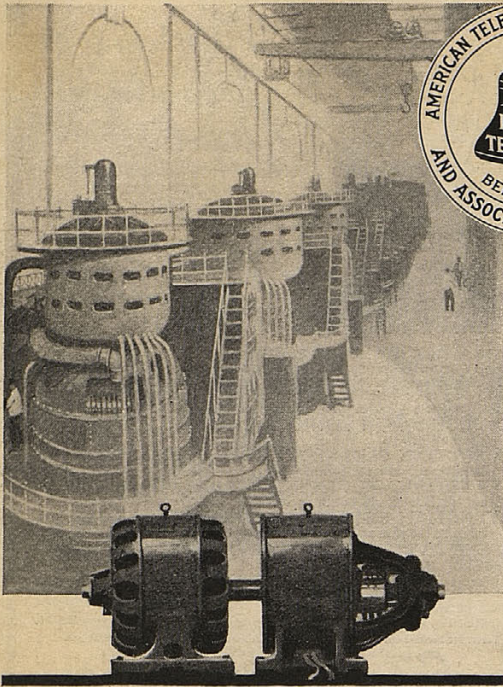
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generator brings the whole mechanism into life and activity.

A similar service is performed for the great agencies of business and industry by the telephones of the Bell System. They carry the currents of communication everywhere to energize our intricate social and business mechanism.

United for universal service, Bell Telephones give maximum efficiency to the big generators of production and commerce.

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One Policy

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By **S. S. Cleveland** (17,000 tons) from NEW YORK, January 15th, 1914. Through the Mediterranean, Suez Canal, Red Sea and Indian Ocean, to Bombay and Colombo. Side trips through India, Holy Land and Egypt, stopping at points in Europe, Asia and Africa. Duration **93 Days**. Cost **\$700 up**, including shore excursions and necessary expenses.

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WEST INDIES CRUISES AND PANAMA CANAL

JAN. FEB. MAR. APR.
16 TO 27 DAYS
\$145 - \$175 UP
SS. VICTORIA LUISE

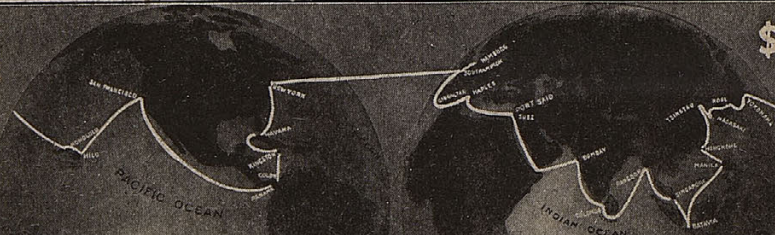


INCLUDING
SIDE
TRIP
ON
CANAL

The **Victoria Luise** has been built especially for cruising in the West Indies. During January, February, March and April. Duration **16 to 27 days**. Cost **\$145 to \$175 up**.

Also four **15-day cruises** from New Orleans during January, February and March by **S. S. Fuerst Bismarck**, and **Kronprinzessin Cecilie**. **\$125 and up**.

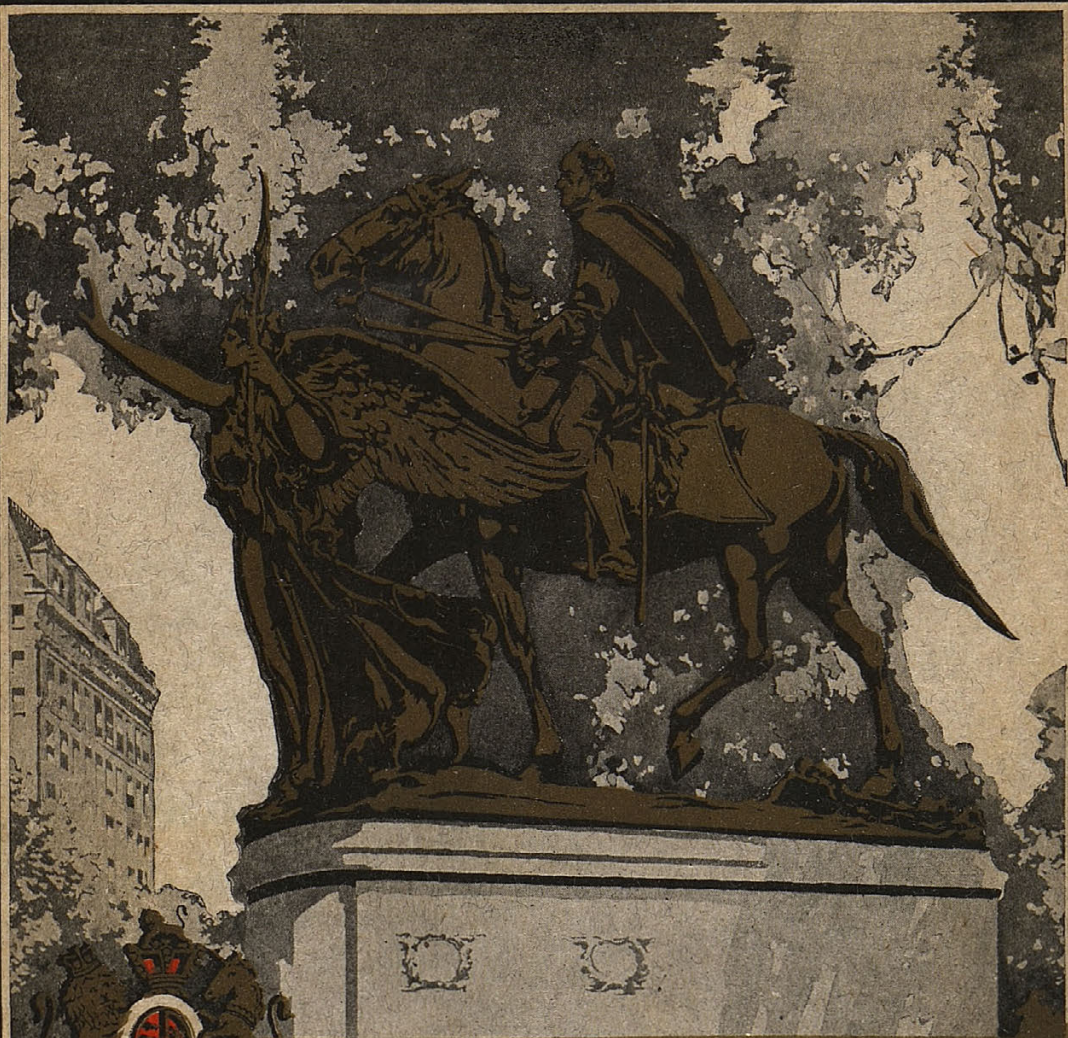
**135 DAY
CRUISE
FROM
NEW YORK
JAN. 31,
1915**



\$900⁰⁰ UP

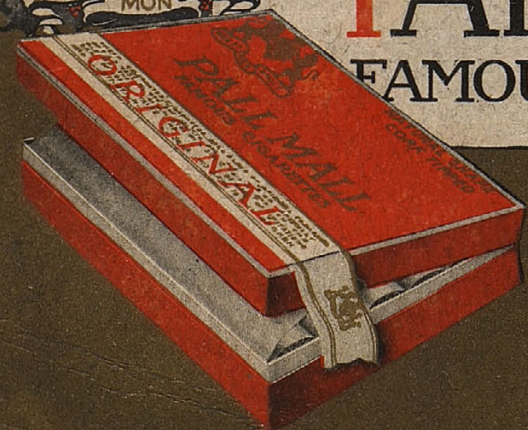
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FOR
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HAMBURG-AMERICAN LINE
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*A Shilling in London
A Quarter Here*